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Taking Bourdieu to the Movies: Understanding Cinema as a Spatial and Embodied Practice



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For Omi, and in loving memory of Sean Lawlor

Abstract

This thesis employs in situ research at two cinemas in London with women who attend matinees for the over-60s to think through the nature of cinema as practice. It combines interview and observation data to explore how what we do at the cinema works to co-constitute particular modes and spatialities of cinema, and co-produce films. The analysis is informed by debates in geography, film and cinema studies, and gerontology - all read through an engagement with Pierre Bourdieu's (1977, 1990) theory of practice. Cinema is also understood as a public space with which collective identities are pre-reflexively formed among the audience members through the body, suggesting an understanding of 'old age' as an emergent and heterogeneous but nevertheless enduring social identity. As such, this thesis argues for an understanding of cinema as a spatial and embodied practice that constitutes and is constituted by the film on the screen, the bodies of the audience and the spaces of viewing. This emphasis on practice attempts to build on the strengths in existing literature by moving beyond decontextualised studies of both films and audiences common to much academic writing on cinema by exploring the politics of representation, theories of embodied spectatorship, and the geography of films in the moment of viewing. In doing so, the thesis suggests that we develop a 'cinematic habitus' across life and that this in part shapes the film we experience in the moment of practice. It suggests that the spaces of cinema – both on and off the screen – are co-constituted not just by different practices, but different practicing bodies. In the specific research context this suggests the constitution of a new space of ageing appropriate to the mode of generation enacted by participants. As such, the understanding of cinema as practice offers a methodological and theoretical contribution to existing understandings of film and audiences by acknowledging cinema's embodied spatio-temporalities in practice. It

concludes by proposing a geography of cinema that pays attention to the co-constitutive interaction between the material spaces of viewing, the film on screen and the embodied audiences.

Contents

Chapter One	Introduction	1
Chapter Two	Shaping cinema as practice: building an embodied and spatial analysis	10
Chapter Three	Engaging with Bourdieu's practice theory	55
Chapter Four	Methodology: Bourdieu's problem with methods, and choosing to study cinema at the cinema	96
Chapter Five	Somatic norms, modes of generation and the practical logic of cinema	149
Chapter Six	The temporalities of practice: Film, memories, and developing the cinematic habitus	195
Chapter Seven	The sensual geographies of cinema space	242
Chapter Eight	Conclusion: Proposing a geography of cinema	287
	Bibliography	318
Appendix One	Participants and films	360
Appendix Two	Questions used as a framework for interviews	362

List of figures

Figure. 1	The exterior of the Rio Cinema, Dalston	125
Figure. 2	Usherettes upstairs at the Rio, approx. 1940s Image courtesy of Rio Cinema	126
Figure. 3	The exterior of the Clapham Picturehouse	126
Figure. 4	The handwritten signs of the Clapham Picturehouse	127
Figure 5.	The stalls at the Rio with balcony intersecting	248
Figure 6.	View from the Rio balcony	250
Figure 7.	The sweeping staircase in the Rio foyer	251
Figure 8.	The top of the Rio staircase, and the smaller flight to the balcony	251
Figure 9.	The ground floor of the Clapham Picturehouse (screens three and four)	253
Figure 10.	Inside screen four at the Clapham Picturehouse. Image courtesy of Picturehouse	253
Figure 11.	Stairs up to Screen Three of the Clapham Picturehouse	255
Figure 12.	Stairs up to Screen Two (the top screen) of the Clapham Picturehouse	255

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Chapter One. Introduction

In the past decade a 'quiet revolution' has occurred at the cinema (Cox, 2012). Long the realm of the young, a palpable shift has taken place and retirees are flocking to their local screens in such numbers that the over-45s now represent the fastest growing cinema audience in Britain and America (Cox, 2012; BFI, 2011; UK Film Council, 2009; FAME, 2007; Macnab, 2007). While the numbers are nowhere near close to overtaking those in the 15-24-age bracket, the over-45s are proving significant to an industry struggling to survive in a competitive climate in which it must battle the increasing threat of smart phones, games consoles, online streaming and piracy (BFI, 2011; Lobato, 2010; McNary, 2010). So much so, that over the course of writing this thesis, Hollywood and British film production have woken up to the older market and begun to make films with it in mind (Cox, 2012, Gant, 2012; Chivers, 2011, McNary, 2010). What concerns me here, however, is not this shift in film content. It is that the over-45 audience group expanded despite the far more common tendency, identified by work in cultural gerontology, for films to ignore or denigrate older people (Robinson et al., 2007; Markson and Taylor, 2000).

That the viewing figures rose in the face of such apparently negative representations points to a discrepancy that exists in much work on film and cinema: that between theory and practice; between decontextualised analyses of films and the way that we watch them (Kuhn, 2011, 2002; Maltby and Stokes, 2007; Staiger, 2000). Why, if they are more often than not confronted by images that offer stereotyped portrayals and/or absent them from society's visual consciousness, are older audiences flocking to the cinema? In this thesis I attempt to address this question by adopting an approach to cinema as social practice,

explored through a case study of women who attend matinees for the over-60s. In doing so, my intention is that this project talks to issues of cinema with relevance beyond the audience group under study.

1.1 Studying cinema as practice

Adopting a practice approach requires a 'shift in emphasis away from thinking through a range of social theoretical 'familiar' (such as structure, system, representation, identity, meaning)' – themes common in work on film, including the geography of film (Dixon et al., 2008) – 'towards attending to activity, action, embodiment, as well as shared practical reason' (Jacobs and Merriman, 2011: 212). Taking social practice as my starting point suggests a concern with 'embodied or practical knowledge and its formation in people's everyday lives, with the world of emotions, desire and imagination and with the infinitude of encounters through which we make the world and are made by in turn' – an approach and focus surprisingly rare in studies of cinema (Simonsen, 2003: 157). The discrepancy described above, between theories of the politics of representation of ageing and the nevertheless increasing number of over-45s going to the cinema, suggests that when we go to the cinema we don't engage the same practices of viewing as those of film theorists. Something happens in the moment of practice that means negative portrayals are not experienced as alienating in the moment. This enduring discrepancy implies the need for new methodologies and differently formulated questions.

1.1.2 Research questions

In light of this discussion, then, a key question for this thesis is:

- How is film representation experienced in practice?

Although I consider this question through a case study of women who attend matinees for the over-60s, asking and addressing it has significance for film studies wider than those concerned by the representation of ageing or film representation more generally. By bringing a practice approach to bear on understandings of film, our engagement is changed from decontextualised analyses of one or more films (the approach still dominant in geography) to one drawn from lived, situated understandings, embedded in the 'everyday'. I do not propose that one is superior to the other, but I am interested to see what happens when we approach an old problem from a new perspective.

While the quotations above summarise well the general approach offered by all theories of social practice, the ways in which the themes outlined are dealt with by different theorists vary widely. Schatzki (2001) points out that there is no one single theory of social practice and clearly the one adopted has significant impact on our subsequent research. As my title suggests, the theory of practice I adopt in this thesis is that offered by French theorist Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1990a).

Bourdieu's approach, developed to combat the enduring division between subjectivism and objectivism in the social sciences, emphasises the importance of embodied action and pays attention to the *doing* of everyday life. Significantly, though, Bourdieu argues that practice is co-constituted with social structures — as we move through the world, we inculcate implicit expectations appropriate to our social position, expectations that more often than not serve to reproduce that position and maintain social hierarchies (1977: 81). Along with these inculcated expectations, we develop congruous *bodily dispositions* so that our material body is also and inescapably a social one (1977: 94).

With this understanding of, and concern with, social difference embedded at the heart of his theory, engaging Bourdieu (1977, 1990a) is to adopt a commitment to incorporate such issues into understanding any practice. As such, while I am keen to explore film representation from a different perspective to that often offered, in doing so I do not intend to abandon such work's consideration of the significance of social identity to cinema. This, then, poses a second question without which, Bourdieu's (1977, 1990a) work implies, we cannot really consider the first:

- How might differentiated bodies practise cinema differently?

This question relates to Bourdieu's (1990a) concept of practical logic, which suggests that practices are only maintained if they serve a practical purpose for an individual or group. This is not a purpose that is consciously assessed — practical logic is understood as a bodily process, engaged in the moment by a *sense* of knowing what to do, or not — a sense that serves to differentiate us. The logic of cinema-going in contemporary society, where many other viewing opportunities exist, is irreducible simply to a desire to watch particular films. As such, it encourages an understanding of cinema that moves beyond the focus on films to consider other possible logics of the practice. Understanding how differentiated bodies practice the cinema differently becomes vital to understanding the resurgence of older cinemagoers, but also suggests that considering such a question requires more than just analysing the images screened.

To think through this question, I conducted empirical work with women who attend matinees for the over-60s, and it is from my work with them that the understanding of cinema offered in this thesis was developed. Essential to Bourdieu's theory, however, is that structures of difference remain implicit and emergent, and are

(re)produced through practice precisely because they are not consciously registered in everyday life, nor brought out by interviews with social scientists (1977: 79). Bourdieu's approach to practice emphasises pre-reflexive, emergent knowledges. The social world is not governed by a series of explicit rules waiting to be uncovered by a social scientist. It is instead enacted in the moment, co-constituted by practice. This highlights an important repercussion of adopting Bourdieu's theory — a commitment to robust empirical research that avoids the tendency of 'conventional' research methods such as interviewing or observation to present practical logic as a pre-existing 'fait accompli' (1990a: 55; Wacquant, 2005).

It was this fluid, fragile, embodied and distinctly temporal way of understanding practice that first led me to adopt such an approach, interested as I was in offering a lived understanding of cinema. Unfortunately those elements that I found so productive in Bourdieu's work are also those that prove most ephemeral, especially in a research context. Adopting Bourdieu's framework perhaps made me particularly sensitive to the difficulty in capturing such elements during fieldwork, but as practice approaches become increasingly common in the social sciences innovative methodologies are being adopted to try to tackle precisely this problem. Engaging such arguments and ideas in this thesis, I wanted to ask with them:

- How might we explore practice empirically?

At the simplest level, Bourdieu's emphasis on *lived* experience, and the corresponding ambiguity provided by practical time, for me generated a commitment to being present in the moment of practice. As such, for my research I

adopted a relatively new method: the go-along (Kusenbach, 2003) – and accompanied participants on their trips to the cinema at two venues in London – the Clapham Picturehouse and the Dalston Rio. This methodology is outlined in full in Chapter Four and is fundamental to the understanding of cinema generated in this thesis.

I chose to limit my case study to female attendees because an engagement with feminist gerontology suggests that women face a ‘double standard of ageing’ in which they are understood to suffer twice – already denigrated as ‘woman’, old age brings with it a further marginalisation (Vares, 2009; Markson, 2003; Sontag, 1972). This is reflected in the literature deconstructing film representations of later life, which emphasise the inequalities between male and female characters (Vares, 2009; Calasanti, 2007; Markson and Taylor, 2000). Going to the cinema with older women brought to the fore the temporalities of practice and emphasised the significance of embodied biographies, understood through Bourdieu’s (1977, 1990a) concept of habitus – ‘a set of dispositions [inculcated across life] which generate practices and perceptions’ (Jenkins, 1992: 74). But being there, in the moment, watching participants and tuning in to my own engagement with cinema also drew out the spatialities of practice.

The significance of space to cinema has long been a concern of geographers of film, and it was their work alongside that of film theorist Giuliana Bruno (2002) that drew me to thinking about the spatialities of cinema (Orueta and Valdés, 2007; Dixon and Aitken, 2006). However, this work is predominantly concerned with space *in* film, with analyses of spaces *of* cinema conspicuous by their absence – an absence that is made more tangible by the very few but insightful exceptions

(Jancovich et al., 2003; Hubbard, 2002). A key question for my research, then, became:

- How are the spaces of cinema constituted?

This question both drove my adoption of the go-along and was emphasised by my experience of it. It is a question I posed before my fieldwork, but the significance of which only became clear across the course of my trips to the cinema. As I went with participants I was repeatedly struck by the co-constitution of space through embodied practice. My analysis of this constitutive relationship between bodies and spaces became key to the understanding of cinema developed through these four questions, and outlined across the following pages. To give a better sense of the shape this takes, this chapter concludes with a brief outline of the structure it follows.

1.2 Structure of the thesis.

The following chapter takes these formative discussions as its starting point to more fully outline the ideas engaged in this thesis. Drawing on work from geography, gerontology alongside film, cinema and audience studies, I try to carve out where insights from these literatures can be usefully combined to develop an understanding of cinema as practice. I conclude with an attempt to synthesise such arguments into a broad-strokes description of the understanding of cinema that is fleshed out across the thesis, as well as evidence the contribution such an understanding makes to existing literature.

In Chapter Three I explain my reasons for adopting a practice approach to cinema and offer a more substantial engagement with Bourdieu's theory. I outline the

elements of his framework that proved fundamental to my understanding of cinema and show how the key concepts adopted in this thesis offer useful theoretical tools through which I can combine many of the insights from literatures discussed in Chapter Two.

As suggested above, Bourdieu's (1977, 1990a) theory poses significant questions about the validity of fieldwork. In Chapter Four I outline my methodology and think through where it might address some of his concerns. Engaging the go-along, alongside informal interviews, means that the first part of this chapter is given over to outlining and explaining the theory behind my methodology, as well as positioning it in the wider literature. The second part of the chapter outlines in detail how my methodology played out in practice and the ways in which it influenced my engagement with the questions posed above.

In Chapters Five to Seven I engage data from my empirical work through the theoretical frameworks thus far discussed. In so doing I attend to the questions outlined above, and attempt to provide evidence for the understanding of cinema that I am posing. Chapter Five is predominantly concerned with asking how differentiated bodies practice cinema differently, and I explore the practical logic of cinema-going for the women I attended matinees with. Doing so suggests a significant influence of such embodied logic on the cinema enacted in practice, and I explore this through a series of discussions related to modes of generation – one of Bourdieu's (1984) lesser used concepts. Chapter Six considers how representation is experienced in practice and engages my data through work on embodied spectatorship alongside Bourdieu's concept of habitus. Doing so develops an understanding of film viewing that considers the embodied, temporal and spatial elements that come in to play in cinema as practice.

Chapter Seven leads on from these discussions to ask how the spaces of cinema constituted. Here I draw on my observations of participants as we moved around the material space of the cinema with the help of Bourdieu's (1977, 1990a) analysis of the Kabyle House as well as work from the critical geography of architecture (Lees, 2001) to draw out the active, fluid and co-constitutive nature of space and embodied practice at the cinema. I engage both my own and participants' responses to the film during and after the moment of viewing to explore the journeys we take at the cinema, and to think through the spatiality of the screen. This 'virtual mobility' (Bruno, 2002) was in practice at odds with a sense of being at home generated by the women at the cinema. Rather than see these two apparently opposing forces (of home and away) as contradictory, however, my research suggests that their mutually constitutive relationship is vital to understanding cinema-going as practice.

I conclude by addressing each question with the arguments made in the previous chapters, bringing them together to offer a tentative framework for exploring cinema as practice and propose that it is necessary to develop a geography of cinema alongside the geography of film. Such a geography could help enrich our understanding of film by offering an active, lived engagement with the ways in which screens are embedded in everyday (public) practice.

Chapter Two. Shaping cinema as practice: building an embodied and spatial analysis

This is a thesis about cinema. The term 'cinema', however, has a number of meanings: it is a place, both generic and specific; a corpus of films by a particular director or from a specific country; and is also used to refer to film as an art form. But to me it implies something that moves beyond these meanings. It connotes a lived practice that integrates cinema as space *and* cinema as film, emphasising the audience gathered in cinema's public space ready to engage the cinema on the screen. It is this understanding to which my empirical work led me, and that I try to develop throughout this thesis.

Thinking about cinema in this way leads to engagement with a wide-range of literatures offering multiple approaches to the major themes with which my work is concerned. While the research questions set out in the previous chapter are as yet without a sustained consideration, the areas of interest they suggest - including film, exhibition, practice, the (ageing) body and space - have long been the focus of cross disciplinary attention. As such, my questions are driven by a desire to contribute to the ever-growing and diverse work on the various elements of cinema. While it would be impossible to outline all of the relevant work here, this chapter is an attempt to show that at the intersections of cultural gerontology, geographical gerontology, film studies, geography of film and audience studies, a gap in knowledge emerges. It is here that my project, and subsequent understanding of cinema, sits.

While I am working to offer an alternative to the 'tunnel vision' focus on film texts in much work on cinema (Allen, 2011; Maltby and Stokes, 2007), films are

nevertheless a defining part of the practice. This chapter begins with an outline of cultural gerontology's engagement of the medium to explore the constitution of ageism in contemporary society. Gerontology's analyses of films offer critical understandings of film representations, and the significance of such representations for how we live the world away from the screen (Robinson et al., 2007; Markson and Taylor, 2000). Despite making a clear contribution to our understandings of ageing in contemporary society, this work also offers a good example of the tendency within film studies — including the geography of film — to engage an imagined spectator. Discussions of emotion and sensation, elements I found fundamental to participants' film viewing, are absent in this literature. The spectator's body is present only as a canvas onto which stereotypes are projected (Twigg, 2004). The material body — fundamental to my formulation of cinema — is, however, a concern elsewhere in gerontology. Indeed, cultural interpretations of corporeal ageing provide a good indication of the understanding of embodiment engaged in this thesis. In the second section I draw on this smaller body of literature to begin an outline of the approach I take (Laz, 2003; Phinney and Chelsa, 2003).

I am of course not the first person to suggest our sensing body is significant as we watch films. A scattering of geographers (Lukinbeal and Zimmerman, 2008; Carter and McCormack, 2006; Crang, 2002) have begun to consider film's affect, for example, and the understanding of cinema generated here is influenced by a group of theorists writing in film studies who are concerned with bringing corporeality to bear on understandings of the medium (Voss, 2011; Sobchack, 2004; Marks, 2002, 2000). Such literature draws attention to and theorises the embodied spectator, exploring the haptic qualities of film. In the third section I talk

through exemplary analyses. In doing so I hope to show that this work argues persuasively for the need to ‘flesh out’ our understanding of the spectator and consider how the viewing body interacts with the screen – an approach fundamental to cinema, as I understand it.

While I found literature on embodied spectatorship a powerful resource in my work, the ‘body’ under discussion remains, for the most part, imagined. In conducting empirical research with women aged over-60 and exploring their practice through Bourdieu’s (1977, 1990a) theory, an emergent social difference became significant to my understanding of cinema. There is of course a strong tradition of audience studies, a tradition that has led to an acknowledgement of the importance of social positions to practices of viewing. Although dominated by studies of television audiences, in the fourth section of this chapter I discuss the small but significant body of work engaging film audiences (Morley, 2009; Barker and Brooks, 1998; Moores, 1993).

The understanding of cinema that emerged out of my research is most closely represented by Boyle’s (2010, 2009) study of ‘watch with baby’ screenings. In her work Boyle, too, explores cinema in the moment, conducting observation and interviews with a collection of the mothers that attend. In doing so, she draws out the significance of cinema space to their practice. Such attention to the material space of viewing is rare in work on contemporary cinema-going but in offering her analysis, Boyle (2010, 2009) is influenced, as am I, by film history – a sub-discipline that explores historical exhibition practices, frequently with a spatial dimension to their analyses (Maltby, 2011; Maltby and Stokes, 2007). While I draw from this work, and discuss it in the fifth section of this chapter, the understanding

of cinema space proposed throughout this thesis is predominantly the result of my observations of participants and myself at the cinema.

In geography, Hubbard (2002, 2003a, 2003b) has explored the significance of cinema spaces in a contemporary context, and I discuss his work alongside the studies of historical exhibition practices in section five, but neither quite offered the relational understanding of space and embodied practice that my empirical work evoked. Geographical gerontology, however, has long considered spaces of ageing and the co-constitution of ageing and place, an approach significant to my understanding (Laws, 1996). I outline this in the sixth section, while drawing on recent work from the critical geography of architecture exploring the constitution of buildings in practice in order to expand on the lived nature of cinema and the enactment of space in the moment (Jacobs and Merriman, 2011; Lees, 2001).

There is of course another spatiality significant to cinema, that of the film. It is to this that the geography of film has devoted itself. The final section outlines the work in the sub-discipline that has been most influential to this project – that which argues the relationship between cinema and the city, a debate that has seen an on-going productive conversation between film studies and geography (Clarke, 1997). While still addressing questions by engaging with film, such analyses consider the haptic nature of the medium and emphasise its ‘virtual mobility’; relating the space on screen to that of the city streets, bringing material space into analyses (Bruno, 2002; Friedberg, 1993).

Each of these literatures contributed to my questions and the resulting formulation of cinema that is developed in this thesis. I conclude by attempting to synthesise

this work and begin to offer the foundations of my approach, before moving on in the following chapter to better outline the theory of practice that shaped it.

2.1 Gerontology and representation: constructing ageism in contemporary culture.

Frustrated with the dominance of biomedical approaches to ageing, cultural gerontology arose in the 1970s and set about deconstructing contemporary understandings of old age as a fixed and negative category (cf. Gullette, 1997; Featherstone and Wernick, 1995; Gubrium, 1975). As constructionist theories of ageing became common, there was a parallel increase of interest in the representations of older people in the media (Calasanti, 2007; Calasanti and Slevin, 2006; Powell and Longino, 2001; Bytheway, 2003; Twigg, 2000). This research was predominantly undertaken to provide empirical evidence in support of the social constructionist thesis, to emphasise that what is thought of as 'old age' is historically and culturally contingent (Blaikie, 1999).

An early example of this approach is Featherstone and Hepworth's (1991) 'Mask of ageing' thesis in which they explore the mismatch between internal age (how we feel) and external age (how we look). They conclude that this incongruity stems from the negative images of ageing that predominate in contemporary society, causing us to reject our external appearance as it becomes closer to that of an 'older person' (1991: 378). There are problems with this thesis, not least in that it implies an unchanging essential 'self' that dwells in a body whose only relevance is as an increasingly decrepit container (Öberg and Tornstam, 1999; Öberg, 1996). But since this ground-breaking article was published, analyses of images of later life have flourished within gerontology and it has become the norm to accept the

power of representations in defining how the aged body and 'being old' is understood and experienced in everyday life (Featherstone and Hepworth, 2005: 360).

Gerontology's work on film fits within this framework and offers textual analyses through which the portrayal of older characters is deconstructed and critically assessed (Robinson, et al., 2007; Markson and Taylor, 2000). This has been used to explore representations of older characters in cartoons (Blakeborough, 2008; Robinson et al. 2007; Robinson and Anderson, 2006; Bishop and Krause, 1984) and in feature films (Woodward, 2006, 1999; Markson, 2003; Markson and Taylor, 2000; Bazzini et al, 1997). Robinson et al. (2007), for example, explored the appearance of older characters in animated Disney films. Despite these animations containing relatively positive portrayals of older characters, they found that the older villains making up just 22% of characters were the ones that dominated children's perception of older people, as children learned to identify them through stereotyped appearance (2007: 204). Robinson later undertook a similar analysis of older characters in teen films and found that, despite the majority having positive physical attributes, it was the stereotypical character traits that matched those expressed by teenagers when asked about older people (2009: 700, 705).¹

In their analysis of characters played by actors and actresses aged over 60, Markson and Taylor (2000; see also Markson, 2003) found that such stereotyping is gendered: men are represented as heroic while women are more often than not cantankerous spinsters (2000: 155; 150). Men tend to remain active in films, and

¹ In conducting these opinion surveys, Robinson et al.'s (2009, 2007) offer a rare indication that analysis drawn from a film text on its own cannot necessarily predict the impact of representations, or the audience response.

thereby maintain their source of power, while women are shown to embody ageist stereotypes, losing their sense of 'self' as youth slips away (2000: 156). Markson and Taylor argue that this reflects and reinforces the cultural belief that a woman's social value lies in her ability to procreate. The loss of this function becomes represented on the body by increased wrinkles and greying hair and, as such, visibly older women become devalued by society (2000: 156). In her study of older women in French cinema, film theorist Martine Beugnet (2006: 11) concludes similarly that these marginal representations reinforce western society's view of older women as 'death-like other'. Such analyses serve to identify important gender discrepancies in representation; showing that older men are often valorised while the visibly aged woman is presented as moral failure (Markson and Taylor, 2000: 156).

As such, film representations are understood to contribute significantly to the 'double standard' of ageing served to women in later life, as sexist stereotypes become compounded by ageism and the older woman is twice marginalised (Woodward, 1999; Sontag, 1972; de Beauvoir, 1972). But just as the representation of older people is seen to be problematic, cultural gerontology also cites what Beugnet terms 'the exclusion of the old from the realm of the visible' — the overwhelming absence in mainstream media of any representation at all — as contributing to marginalisation in later life (Beugnet, 2006: 3; Bildtgård, 2000; Markson and Taylor, 2000). And while recent hit films such as *Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* (2012) and *Expendables* (2010) — featuring casts dominated by the over-50s — suggest that this absence seems to be changing (Cox, 2012a; McNary, 2010), Chivers (2011) argues that the growing number of older actors on screen is yet to resolve any problem: 'old' age is still reduced to a fixed and manageable

stage of life that can be sufficiently represented through a series of stereotypes. As she explains, 'Although the plots have changed, the idea that age is physical, and physically demeaning, has not... a crow's foot still signifies the passage of time, and symbolises decay rather than improvement' (2011: XVIII).

One continued absence is that of sexually active older characters and this, too, has been shown to have a gendered dimension: older men are more likely to be presented on screen as sexually active, but in relationships with younger women (Vares, 2009). Thus, in the absence of wider narratives about the sex lives of older people, representations turn to stereotypes to fill the void in information (Walz, 2002: 111). Significantly, Walz (2002) and Bildtgård (2000) argue that this dearth results in a cultural climate whereby in order to stay sexualised, older people must strive to avoid physical signs of ageing. This is a theme that is taken on and explored in work on representations associated with the anti-ageing industry and active-ageing policies. The general thrust of this work is important for this project as it frames issues around ageing in contemporary society that are significant to the increase in older audiences at the cinema.

Such literature emphasises that in consumer culture old age is presented as a matter of individual choice — as something that can, and should, be avoided by use of the appropriate product. This work often takes as its starting point the acknowledgement that since the late 20th Century there have been substantial changes in our experience of later life and its representations (Katz and Marshall, 2003; Gilleard, 2005). No longer are age groups standardised or chronologically determined (Woodward, 1999). Instead, the boundaries have been blurred and a sense of timelessness constructed, supported by the new body technologies designed to resist the physical signs of chronological age (Calasanti, 2007;

Featherstone and Hepworth, 2005; Katz and Marshall, 2003). The growth of the 'Third Age'² has resulted not just in the anti-ageing industry but also in a new policy drive for 'active ageing': the 'young-old' are encouraged to stay active to stay 'young', with youth now defined more through appearance, attitude and health than birth year (Hugman, 1999).

Until the 1980s when active ageing arose as a concept, the infirm minority of people over 60 had dominated public narratives of later life, and the shift in focus to the 'young-old' and 'agelessness' was initially welcomed by cultural gerontology. However, it has since been argued that rather than improve cultural perceptions of older age, these representations serve to further stigmatise 'natural' ageing and it becomes a moral duty to remain active as we grow older (Clarke and Warren, 2007; Boston and Davey, 2006; Katz, 2000; Hugman, 1999). Similarly, in reinforcing the idea that ageing well is ageing youthfully, this representation — in policy, the media and gerontology alike — continues to valorise youth over age and does nothing to reclaim the physical signs of ageing as positive. Instead, it once again encourages us to avoid them for as long as possible (Calasanti and Slevin, 2006; Katz and Mashall, 2003; Bytheway, 2000).

The main focus of the work discussed here is to identify, deconstruct and challenge the stereotypes of older people (particularly older women) propagated by the media through representations and their absence. Film here, then, offers a powerful tool to cultural gerontologists exploring and evidencing a wider argument

² The Third Age is a concept first suggested by Laslett (1989) to reflect a 'new' stage in life that has come with increased longevity. The Third Age sits between the Second Age (defined by responsibilities such as childcare and work) and the Fourth Age (dependency in later life), with the First Age being the dependency of childhood. In this framework the Third Age is understood as a time of independence and freedom, as the post-retirement generation have fewer responsibilities than those in the Second Age and but are still physically able and have an income in the form of a pension.

about the social construction of old age as a fixed, knowable and stable category. Such work is important for this project because it helps to break down normalised assumptions about 'old' age and suggests film's complicity in constructing them. However, the overwhelmingly negative engagement with film representation by gerontologists is complicated by the 'quiet revolution' with which I opened this thesis: the continual expansion of older audiences at the cinema, at a rate faster than any other age group. While the increase in films with older stars, and a growing number of films aimed at this market, is thought to relate to this audience expansion, this seems to be more the industry's reaction to the growth rather than its cause (McNary, 2010). With this in mind, such literature raises the question why such audiences are flocking to the cinema to watch films that have been shown to marginalise their age group. It problematises the focus on the abstracted film text and suggests that something happens to such negative portrayals in the moment of viewing. How, then, is film representation experienced in practice?

One of the ways in which this can be explored is by thinking through the body in the audience, as well as the body on the screen. If, as the above suggests, stereotyped representations or the absence of the older body in films mean that in 'real' life the ageing body is read negatively, then it seems important to consider that 'real' body more closely (Twigg, 2004; Bildtgård, 2000). This is particularly important because, as I discuss below, the sensing body is fundamental to the understanding of cinema being formulated here. In fact, all of the articles and chapters referenced above include a short sentence or two toward the end acknowledging the importance of the corporeal body in representation — but it is neither theorised fully nor empirically explored (Walz, 2002: 102; Bildtgård, 2000: 172; Markson and Taylor, 2000: 139; Hugman, 1999: 194). There is, however,

some evocative work elsewhere in gerontology exploring the materialities of the ageing body within a cultural framework that are of use in thinking through the older body at the cinema.

On the whole, work on the material body argues for a resistance of mind/body divisions and the recognition of the body as both receptor and generator of meaning (cf. Phinney and Chelsa, 2003; Wahidin, 2002; Twigg, 2000). As yet, the latter perspective has not been utilised in analyses of media representations, although there have been some moves in this direction (Walz, 2002; Bildtgård, 2000). I hope to show that by combining these approaches in an analysis of cinema as practice, we can consider not just how representation is written onto older bodies but also how the lived bodies of the audience impact on a film's meaning. The next section outlines some of the key work being done in this area, before I move on to discuss studies of embodied spectatorship with which such an understanding can be usefully combined.

2.2 Gerontology and the material body: exploring the corporealities of ageing.

As the above suggests, in order to escape the biomedical understanding of old age as natural decline, cultural gerontology turned away from the corporealities of ageing and engaged the material body only as receptor of culturally constructed meaning (Calasanti, 2007; Powell and Longino, 2001; Bytheway, 2000). In the last couple of decades, however, a number of researchers have been turning to alternative epistemologies to 'bring the body back in'. As Twigg explains, the drive towards such analyses is the acknowledgement that 'we need to recognise how...discourses [of ageing] are formed and take shape in a dialectical relationship

with real bodies that experience real pain, sickness and death – as well as other more enjoyable sensations’ (Twigg, 2004: 70). To this end there have been a number of studies exploring what it is to ‘be’ an ageing body (Phinney and Chelsa, 2003; Wahidin, 2002), or to be a younger body working with older bodies (Twigg, 2000). These empirical studies are supported by a growing number of theoretical arguments, calling for the incorporation of the corporeal into gerontology (Twigg, 2004; Hockey and James, 2003; Harper, 1997). Developing a nuanced understanding of the physiological body as existing in a co-constitutive relationship with culture, this literature offers an opportunity to draw from the cultural analyses above while thinking through the body, engaging the theories of embodied spectatorship outlined below in such a way to make room for a consideration of social difference.

Harper (1997) was an early proponent of this perspective. Engaging with ideas developed by the feminist theorist Elizabeth Grosz to overcome the constructionist/essentialist division in approaches to the body, Harper argues that the corporeal ageing body is key to the social construction of later life. In her understanding, negative corporealities are defined as such through the patriarchal discourse of control in which rational mind is valued over emotional body. Harper suggests that as men age physically they become less able to control their bodily functions, bringing them closer to the irrational body (and femininity), a status that corresponds to a loss of power and their lower status in society (1997: 169, see also Calasanti, 2007). By (re)introducing the material body into analyses of the cultural construction of old age, Harper (1997) shows the importance of integrating corporeality to generate an understanding of the lived constitution of social difference along age lines. Her emphasis on overcoming the

constructionist/essentialist division in understandings of the body resonates with the conception of embodiment that I attempt to incorporate into my understanding of cinema via Bourdieu's (1977, 1990a) theory of practice, which shares with Harper (1997) a desire to avoid such binaries.

In calling on gerontologists to 'theorise age and embodiment as mutually constituting accomplishments,' Laz (2003: 503) further encourages such an approach. Drawing on interview data, she shows that her participants understand 'their experiences of embodied ageing as both material and representational' (2003: 518). As such, she suggests, neither foundationalist arguments (in which the differences in bodies are seen as a pre-social explanation for the differences in society) nor anti-foundationalist arguments (in which the body becomes a product of representation) are sustainable. While she agrees with the understanding of age as a cultural construction that is 'accomplished', Laz is keen to emphasise the importance of recognising the corporeal body's contribution to this accomplishment – something lacking in analyses of representation (2003: 505). Bodies, then, are at once culturally produced and material entities, with neither state precluding the other (2003: 508). Laz (2003) points out, though, that people experience the 'same' embodiment differently: 'corporeal facts never speak for themselves. Individuals experience and interpret these facts and act on them in concrete settings and in the context of highly varied biographies' (Laz, 2003: 517).

Both Laz (2003) and Harper (1997) provide valuable insights for this exploration of cinema as, when the body becomes an active participant in the construction of meaning, a co-constitutive relationship between embodied audience and representation is suggested. Their work shows that in generating an understanding of the impact of film representations of later life without considering

the material body, gerontology leaves an important element of cultural ageing unexplored. I believe that this calls for further research into the lived experience of representations and the meaning making process that occurs in the moment of viewing, a key concern of this thesis. The lack of attention to the sensing body is a problem that film studies also suffers from, but which has begun to be challenged by theories of embodied spectatorship. This approach has proved fundamental to the formulation of cinema as practice developed in this thesis, and the next section discusses it in some detail.

2.3 Bringing the body back in: theories of embodied spectatorship.

Despite the sensing body being a focus of early work on film, with the rise of screen and apparatus theory in the 1970s a ('disembodied') semiotic-psychoanalytic framework came to dominate the newly institutionalised discipline (Sheil, 2001; Stam and Miller, 2000; Shaviro, 1993). However, in the early 1990s a range of theorists challenged what they argued was an unacknowledged and unjustified idealist epistemology that took for granted the importance of a knowing mind at the cost of the body (Shaviro, 1993: Viii; Sobchack, 1992: xvi; Casebier, 1991: 1). Some attempted to remedy this from within the psycho-semiotic framework (Williams, 1991), but more turned to alternative philosophies (Shaviro, 1993; Sobchack, 1992; Casebier, 1991). In this section I focus on three key manifestations of the encounter between film and the body: Laura Marks' Deleuze-influenced concept of haptic visuality;³ Vivian Sobchack's phenomenological film

³ Deleuze's theory of film (1989, 1986) understands cinema as an event, in which the film is not a text to be interpreted but is instead an abstraction of movement and temporality that intersect in fluid ways. There is no fixed meaning in this theory. Instead, the film-image 'becomes' in the space between subject and object, dissolving the borders between them and generating a haptic encounter (Herzog, 2000: 85).

theory;⁴ and Christiane Voss's use of Sartre's understanding of affect to think through film's 'surrogate body'.⁵ In different ways they all emphasise the importance of the corporeal body's experience of moving images and in so doing begin to expose limitations to the media analyses from gerontology described above, in which the body is theorised as discursive construct. In short, these approaches begin to point toward the productivity of conducting an embodied analysis of cinema such as that adopted in this thesis.

Adopting a theoretical framework that takes in history of art and Deleuze's film theory, Laura Marks (2002: 2) develops the concept of 'haptic visuality', in which we feel with the eyes and are drawn close to the image. This she opposes to 'optic visuality', in which we are distanced from the image and are able to apprehend it cognitively. Although Marks acknowledges that both the optic and haptic are involved in most 'processes of seeing' she argues, following Deleuze, that this is not a quality contained by all moving images (2000: 184).⁶ Instead, it is an image-

⁴ Sobchack (2000) draws on Merleau-Ponty's existential phenomenology, particularly his work on perception. Two key strands of his work are relevant here: first, that we are always already a sensing body-in-the-world but our awareness of this recedes with the development of the social mind (1962: xviii); second, we perceive the world synaesthetically – with *all* of our senses. Importantly, these senses do not require intervention by knowledge to amount to perception. Instead, 'the senses translate each other without any need of an interpreter, and are mutually comprehensible without the intervention of any idea' (1962: 235).

⁵ In Sartre's understanding, affect becomes a dimension of belief based on 'impressions' and *feeling* whether something is believable, rather than *reasoning* that it is. Voss (2011) argues that if understood in this way the 'affectation-by-something includes a temporary (and not automatically irrational) belief in the being thus of an object that appears' (2011: 138). It is through affect, then, that we can understand how we come to be immersed in film.

⁶ Fundamental to Deleuze's (1989, 1986) work on film is a distinction between the movement-image, which relies on cliché and on the sensory-motor-schema (cause and effect logic), and the time-image, which engages the senses to convey the inherent unknowability of the world (1989: 5, 17, 20).

affect actively sought out by particular filmmakers, often artists, who are engaging the skin to make a point about the limits of representation (2000: 12). In describing the films by video artists (2002) or intercultural cinema (2000), Marks often uses examples of images that are disrupted in some way. The argument here is that if an image is unclear then the mind cannot apprehend the object on the screen and, thus, can only make sense of it by way of the body, resulting in haptic visuality. There is an inherent spatiality to haptic perception, it 'privileges the material presence of the image', and in these instances we *feel* the image as we cannot 'see' it (2000: 163).

Arguing that 'sense organs are the site where culture crosses the body' (2000: 199), Marks suggests that different cultures develop different hierarchies of sensoria, and these 'sensoria can be translated into, and translate, cinematic languages' (2000: 206). Her use of the term haptic visuality, she explains, 'emphasises the viewer's inclination to perceive' haptic images as such, a response that depends on our culturally generated sensoria (2000: 162). This suggests that the meaning of film representation cannot be understood as fixed, as certain films will resonate with certain cultural sensoria and not others: 'the more one is able to engage with the sensuous memories called upon by the film, the more its audio-visual medium becomes merely a means of access to an ultimately *synesthetic experience*' when it does not, we revert to a reflexive engagement (2000: 223, my italics).

This begins to challenge gerontology's film analyses described above since Marks' (2002, 2000) work indicates that the meaning made by (or with) film cannot be reduced to an analysis of representation 'on screen'. Instead, the viewing body impacts upon such a representation in the moment of viewing. But while this is

relevant to my understanding of cinema, in her work Marks (2002, 2000) argues that haptic visuality is most relevant, indeed almost unique to, intercultural and art cinema. The application of her work by other researchers similarly relies on particular examples of haptic images, praised for this quality (the majority of work engages French art-house cinema. Cf. McMahon, 2008; Newton, 2008; Scholz and Surma, 2008; Beugnet, 2007). There has been some attempt at applying the argument to mainstream cinema but haptic visuality continues to be accepted as an extra-ordinary quality of particular (moving) images (Turnock, 2000: 263). This seems to add limits to an approach that, I believe, has a wider applicability. To me, the notion of haptic visuality can be used to expose a tactility and sensuality that is immanent in all moving images and I engage significantly with Marks' work in formulating my understanding of cinema (see Kracauer in Hansen, 1993; Williams, 1991).

My suggestion that our sensing body matters in film viewing contexts beyond those explored by Marks (2002, 2000) is supported by a number of other theories of embodied spectatorship. While Marks' (2002, 2000) work emphasises touch, Sobchack (2004, 2000, 1992) adopts Merleau-Ponty's concept of synesthetic perception — in which *all* of our senses are seen as working simultaneously and together — to explore the nature of spectatorship.⁷ As Sobchack explains, to

⁷ It is perhaps important to note that Deleuze has posed significant criticism of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology. He argues that, despite claiming the opposite, Merleau-Ponty's (1962) phenomenology of perception maintains a split between subject and world (Fielding, 2009: 85; Del Rio, 2005: 62). The key difference being that while Merleau-Ponty maintains that there is a 'methodological bridge' between the thingness (for example, the film) and (always bodily) consciousness, for Deleuze, no such bridge is possible because thing and body dissolve into one another (Del Rio, 2005: 62). For Deleuze, we cannot be conscious of or perceive an image — 'consciousness already *is* the image' and vice versa (Mullarkey, 2009: 179).

Merleau-Ponty our senses are not a possession of the body; they constitute it. The lived body is 'sensible. It is, from the first, a perceptive body' (1992: 77). For him, the project of phenomenology is to tune into this perceptive body and offer 'pure description', free of too much theorising or analysis. It is to this end that Sobchack (2004, 2000) provides an analysis of the lived body in film viewing by offering an account – from her body – of watching Jane Campion's film *The Piano*.

Through her analysis, Sobchack suggests an understanding of spectatorship as 'cinesthetic', arguing that initial engagement with film is sensual, not cognitive, although the two always and necessarily co-exist (2000: 3). To Sobchack, the body is a carnal, messy, sensuous thing that would not be silenced by the mind. Instead, she argues that the lived body of the cinesthetic subject experiences an ambiguous oscillation between the 'real' and the 'as if real' that serves to momentarily conflate the lived body of the spectator and the representation on the screen (2000: 23). This again challenges notions of film representation that maintain a de facto division between film and sensing corporealities, discussing the body only in relation to the impact of negative representation. Instead, to Sobchack, the meaning of the body and the meaning of the film are seen to be fundamentally co-constitutive in the moment of viewing. This present tense, implicit experience, Sobchack argues, comes to be seen post-hoc as a cognitive representation because sense is 'at once *carnal matter* and *conscious meaning*', with the former devalued in scientific discourse (2000: 22).

Fundamental to Sobchack's (2004) argument is her emphasis on embodiment as *distinct from 'the body'*. Rather than being reducible to the body, 'embodiment is a radically material condition of human being that necessarily entails both the body and consciousness, objectivity and subjectivity, in an irreducible ensemble' (2004:

4). Both Marks (2002, 2000) and Sobchack (2004, 2000, 1992), then, suggest that the sensing body is of fundamental importance to our experience of representation – and film – in practice. All of this challenges the understanding of representation arrived at by conventional film studies. Rather than something separate from us, representation becomes constituted in the moment through the body.

Further reinforcing such an approach, French film theorist Christiane Voss (2011) argues that as an ‘illusion forming medium’, cinema relies on the spectators’ belief in that illusion – a belief reached not just through rational assessments, but also through affect. Echoing the ideas discussed above, she argues that:

‘a certain degree of affective entanglement is necessarily part and parcel of the cinematic formation of illusion and... *the spectator is neither object nor viewing subject of a technique of illusion that could be described independently of him or her*. Rather, the *film spectator constitutes*, as a resonating body in need of further determination, *the illusion-forming medium of cinema*’ (2011: 139; my italics)

Like Marks (2000) she suggests that this means a different film might be made through a different resonating body. For Voss, though, this body can be understood as a ‘surrogate body’ which, by virtue of the ‘mental and sensorial-affective resonance’ of the film, “loans” a three-dimensional body to the screen and thus tips the second dimension of the film event over into the third dimension of the sensing body’ (2011: 145).

The body, then, becomes ‘a constituent feature of the filmic architecture’ (2011: 145). Importantly for Voss, this ‘entanglement’ does not represent the loss of a sense of empirical reality. While we might loan our affective-belief system to the

film narrative, we still know that it is not real, as at the cinema we are ‘relieved of action’ — we know, for example, that we do not need to escape the fire on the screen (2011: 140). This is because cinema’s affect comes not from verisimilitude but from illusory stimulation (see also Shaviri, 1992: 32). As such the ‘surrogate space’ produced by the resonant body of the spectator ‘necessarily features a temporal dimension that is at the very least double’, taking in the ‘temporal flow’ of the narrative on the screen, and that of the ‘empirical environment’, with perception of the latter significantly reduced during a successful illusory immersion (2011: 145).

Voss (2011) engages notions of creative projection to think through an active embodied perception. Creative projection represents the additions provided to a film’s narrative by the surrogate body in the *creation of cinema*. One example of these ‘projective additions’ is the ‘disposition to endow film characters with one’s own biographical experiences and memories’, suggesting that different biographies and memories — both with differentiating qualities — enact different cinema, much like Marks’ (2000) cultural sensoria but on a localised level (2011: 143). However, while these details may contribute to the illusion, if we start rationally thinking about them as we watch then we disintegrate the ‘surrogate corporeality’ so that the pleasure forming illusion is broken (2011: 149). In my own research such biographical details emerged as significant to the embodied constitution of cinema and they are explored in Chapter Six.

Although I have focussed here on the in-depth exploration of embodied spectatorship undertaken within film studies, it is important to acknowledge that the spectator’s sensing body is not entirely absent from the geography of film (Lukinbeal and Zimmerman, 2008; Moreno and Aitken, 2008; Carter and

McCormack, 2006; Crang, 2002). Arguing against the 'ocularcentrism' of work on film, Crang (2002), for example, joins Marks in drawing on Deleuze's film theory and calling for recognition of film's visuality as offering haptical engagement, 'a practice of grabbing hold of, reaching out, apprehending and touching' (2002: 301). Furthermore, many emphasise the fluidity of meaning in the moment, depending on who is watching and the context in which they watch (Escher, 2006; Crang, 2002; Schönberg, 2002).

Escher (2006) argues, for example, that when watching a film, regardless of the landscape shown, 'the audience perceives a landscape it has seen before' processing 'this substitute into its own subjective sense of perception' (2006: 309). What Escher (2006) argues here is that 'representation' should not be understood as fixed – as easily classifiable as realistic or unrealistic. Instead, like Voss (2011), Marks (2002, 2000) and Sobchack (2004, 2000, 1992) suggest, these are decided in the moment of viewing, in relation to the lived audience. This relates back to Crang's (2002) Deleuze-influenced work as he claims that film flattens space so that it becomes removed from 'historico-material narrative'. Once confronted with this 'any-space-whatever,' the spectator supplies its quantification. Here, then, the spectator stands among images, creating them, rather than 'standing over them' (2002: 23).

Taken together, the work from Marks (2002, 2000), Sobchack (2000), Voss (2011) and the scattering of articles in the geography of film indicate the importance of 'fleshing out' our understandings of film meaning. In doing so, they emphasise the polysemy found through emotional and sensual responses, and persuasively suggest a working body that is actively involved in the moment that film becomes cinema. In bringing the body back in to work on film, this literature begins to

suggest ways of understanding what Janet Staiger (2000: 37) terms the ‘perversity of spectators’: the ability of spectators to get something completely different out of a film text than that which is found there by film scholars.

Such an analysis read alongside gerontology’s work discussed above and Bourdieu’s (1977, 1990a) framework outlined in the following chapter raises the question of social difference to this formulation. If our bodies are fundamental to meaning made in the moment, what, then, is the significance of bodily difference at the cinema? How might differentiated bodies – such as those of older women – practice cinema differently? While the work outlined here offers ways of thinking about the perversity of spectators through the body, and raises issues of social difference, it does not access either in practice. Indeed Voss (2011) acknowledges that she engages an ‘ideal case’ to explore her theoretical arguments and the same is true for all of the work described here. The spectator – now embodied – remains imagined, with the exception of Sobchack’s (2004, 2000) description of her own film viewing. Perhaps because of this, while all, and Voss (2011) and Marks (2000) in particular, offer useful ways of thinking through the significance of social and cultural difference to embodied spectatorship or haptic viewing, this difference – fundamental to my work — is left relatively unexplored.

Literature on embodied spectatorship offers one more insight for this thesis. By engaging the spectator’s body, it suggests a spatiality of viewing that is significant to cinema. Both Marks (2000) and Voss (2011) argue that despite co-immersion of body and film, the exhibition site (be it a bedroom or a cinema) remains important in the moment of viewing. Marks (2000) suggests that as we watch a film we simultaneously absorb extra-diegetic information from the viewing environment. ‘In short,’ she explains, even before the film starts ‘the cinema viewing experience is

already multisensory' (2000: 212). This sensuous viewing context, for Marks, inevitably offers materially constituted meaning to the work on display. Sobchack supports this by arguing that 'our lived bodies (and our experience of them) is always also mediated and qualified by our engagements with other bodies and other things' (2004: 4). To me this strongly implies the need to explore such spatiality to understand cinema as practice and this became significant in my own work. But Voss (2011), Marks (2002, 2000) and Sobchack (2004, 2000, 1992) remain predominantly concerned with the film itself and its relationship to the (mainly imagined) body, nodding towards but leaving unexplored the significance of material space to such a relationship. Perhaps surprisingly, the geography of film pays equally little attention to spaces of viewing.

In an attempt to develop a spatialised embodied analysis of cinema as practice that learns from the work outlined thus far and pays attention to social difference my work focuses on a particular audience group — women who attend matinees for the over 60s. Audience studies has long shown the different knowledge produced when we engage empirical audiences, and in the next section I turn to recent work on film audiences, particularly Boyle's (2010, 2009) work which offers a closer interaction with cinema space, and with the viewing body — offering an approach similar to that which I am adopting here.

2.4. Engaging the empirical audience: moving beyond the text and generating a sense of social difference.

Despite a strong tradition of work with television audiences (Hermes, 2009; Morley, 2009; Kim, 2006; Gillespie, 1995; Liebes and Katz, 1990; Ang, 1985), comparatively little work has been conducted with those of film (Thornham, 1999;

Barker and Brooks, 1998; Stacey, 1994). Much that does exist is historical in focus, including a significant number of oral histories of cinema-going (Bowles, 2007; Puwar, 2007; Labanyi, 2005; Martin-Márquez, 2005; Kuhn, 2002). Most of those concerned with contemporary audiencing focus on individual film texts or fan cultures, such as Barker and Brooks' (1998) formative study of audiences of *Judge Dredd*. As a consequence the scattering of scholars undertaking research into contemporary cinema-going provide long overdue insight into audience members' engagement with the practice (Barker, 2009; Rao, 2007; Fernandes, 2006). Of particular relevance to this project is Boyle's (2010, 2009) study of screenings for new parents, predominantly mothers, and their babies held at the Grosvenor cinema in Glasgow.

Unlike the majority of film-audience studies which tend to engage audiences of particular texts, Boyle's 'begins with a cinema and an audience gathered within it' (2010: 277). A new mother herself, Boyle conducted five months of participant observation as well as interviewing 25 fellow attendees in order to explore the intersections between these cinema events and the negotiation of recent parenthood. In this way, Boyle is interested in 'what cinema is, or can be, *for*' (2010: 277; 2009: 262). While she found that films were not irrelevant, many of the women would go to the screenings regardless of what film was showing (2010: 280). Going to the cinema, participants explained, helped them to feel 'normal' despite the big changes that they were experiencing as new parents (2009: 271; 2009: 266; 2010: 283).

In finding that the women related to the films on the screen as much through discussions of the visual spectacle as those of narrative, Boyle argues that they occupy a space similar to that described by Gunning (1989) in his classic study of

the 'cinema of attractions' constituted by early film (2009: 261). Boyle suggests that, like audiences of early film, here both mother and baby were 'learning how to be a cinema audience' anew (2010: 280). As such, for the mothers it 'became a site for the re-negotiation of identity and, specifically, their new relationship to public space' (2009: 276; 2010: 280), offering 'an opportunity to reconcile a former sense of self with their new identities as mothers', although this did not always work (2010: 284). Situating her discussion within rhetoric around 'good' and 'bad' parenting, Boyle suggests this was partly possible due to a certain solidarity among the audience, a sense that everyone was 'in the same boat', and therefore less judgemental (2010: 280). As such, Boyle argues, the pleasure gained from Watch With Baby Screenings stemmed from 'the sense of belonging to a particular kind of audience', emphasising a collective nature of cinema that also emerged in my research and which I have come to recognise as vital to the conception being developed here (2009: 267).

Boyle's (2010, 2009) attention to the collective atmosphere at the cinema enables her to move beyond the models of social difference engaged by classic audience studies that have been subject to charges of determinism (Hermes, 2009; Morley, 2009). By instead emphasising a social identity forged in the collective space of the cinema, Boyle (2010, 2009) implies a more emergent and dynamic understanding, an in-the-moment relational understanding of social difference that resonates with my own findings.

In conducting research at the cinema with a particular audience, Boyle accesses all three of the key elements I want to bring into an understanding of cinema. She considers the films seen (2010: 281), emphasises the viewing body's sensory and affective responses (2010: 281; 2009: 271), and indicates the significance of the

'colonisation' of the cinema space for the audience, as well as the cultural status of the exhibition site (2010: 279). In doing so, Boyle indicates the different understandings generated when the film on the screen, the viewing body, and the space of viewing are considered together and her work supports the value of generating an understanding of cinema that considers all three together, as I am trying to do here. I had already undertaken my own research by the time I read Boyle. When I did, the number of crossovers between our findings struck me, dealing as they do with very different life stages and differently formulated audiences. Where I hope to contribute to her insights is by paying closer attention to the co-constitutive relationship between film, body and space at the cinema, as well as by considering the significance of methodology in generating such an understanding.

The insights offered by Boyle's work persuasively suggest the value of studying lived audiences — including the importance of paying attention to the identities and social difference being constituted in the shared space of the cinema as well as the impact this may have on representation in practice (Barker, 2009). And like Voss (2011), Marks (2000) and Sobchack (2000), Boyle (2010, 2009) also suggests that where we watch is important. But what impact do such spaces have on cinema in practice? How are the spaces of cinema constituted? It seems clear that to explore this question, the material spaces of viewing must be considered. While Boyle (2010, 2009) offers a rare example of such a consideration in studying contemporary cinema, there is a significant body of work exploring the historical practices of exhibition that has long considered the spatialities of cinema (Vijver and Biltereyst, 2012; Maltby, 2011; Allen, 2007; Maltby and Stokes, 2007; Hansen, 1991). These studies offer an approach to cinema that has influenced mine

significantly, and this project in many ways began as an attempt to engage some of their insights in a contemporary context.

2.5. Engaging the ‘public’: studies of exhibition from film studies and geography.

In his exploration of the historical trajectory from animated photography to film Doel shows that, despite common assumptions, the arrival of film was not celebrated because of its ability to capture movement — this had already been achieved through the Kinetoscope. The notable difference offered by this new technology was, rather, the ability to *project* a moving image and release it from the small viewing boxes of earlier offerings (2008: 93). Exhibition and the material spaces of viewing have been fundamental to cinema from day one, but they receive surprisingly little attention in the literature (Maltby and Stokes, 2007).

Writing contemporaneously to the influx of cinemas into 1920s Berlin, the German cultural theorist Siegfried Kracauer’s (1987/1926; 1995/1962) analysis of the ‘palaces of distraction’ was probably one of the first to highlight the significance of exhibition space to the both the film on the screen and the bodies of the audience (1987/1926: 91-92). While such an approach is rarely applied to contemporary cinema, over the last two decades critical film historians have been exploring this triad through historical analyses of exhibition practices (Maltby et al, 2011; Maltby et al., 2007; Allen, 2007, 2006; Rae Hark, 2002; Friedberg, 1993; Gomery, 1992; Hansen, 1991; Gunning, 1987). Their work can help chart one element of the approach to the material space of cinema that I adopt in this thesis, emphasising as it does the significance of cinema as public, collective, space.

An early example is Hansen's (1991) *Babel and Babylon* in which she explores the 'public dimension of [early] cinematic reception' in America and its intersection with 'other formations of public life'. Hansen (1991) suggests that cinema at this time offered an 'alternative public sphere' in which women and newly urbanised working-class immigrants were able to negotiate changing identities, despite the increasingly universal address of Hollywood's outputs (Hansen, 1991: 11, 90-91; see also Bruno, 1993). However, the cheap price and rowdy atmosphere of these early 'Nickelodeons' gradually led to associations with the 'uncivilised mass', an association that exhibitors rejected once they realised the potential in recruiting audiences willing and able to pay a higher entrance fee. Significantly, their attempts to cultivate such an audience began with a shift in the venue design, upgrading from the wooden benches of Nickelodeons to the ornate environs of the 'picture palace' (Hansen, 1991: 63; Gomery, 1992: 30).

The arrival of picture palaces in cities across the world led to a distinction between audience types, and an association of certain audiences with particular places of viewing (Aveyard and Moran, 2011; Biltereyst et al, 2011; Maltby, 2011; Allen, 2011, 2010, 2006; Meers et al, 2010; Wilinsky, 1996). This led to distinctive cultural geographies of exhibition that still exist today, albeit in changed form (Jancovich et al., 2003; Hubbard, 2003a, 2003b, 2002). One key study of the significance of such geographies of consumption in practice is Stewart's (2003) detailed spatial analysis of the cinema-going experiences of southern black migrants to Chicago in the 1910s.

Accessing the ever-complex questions of the nature of cinematic pleasure experienced by black audiences from a new angle, Stewart explores not just *what* but *where* black audiences in 1910s Chicago would have watched. In doing so she

emphasises the effects exhibition sites have on spectatorship, providing an important reminder that such 'public' spaces of viewing can be exclusionary, and that where black spectators watched films had fundamental effects on their ability to immerse themselves in the experience. Stewart (2003) argues that while the segregated mainstream cinemas provided a demeaning and hostile environment, the all-black theatres in the 'Black Belt' of Chicago offered a welcome public space in which the new audiences could (re)constitute a public identity.

In mainstream theatres, black bodies remained conspicuous – often squeezed into a seating section that kept black audiences separate from their white counterparts – and, with the social self ever present, immersion-in-film was disrupted (2003: 672). Rather than conclude that this represents the complete experience of black spectatorship at the time, Stewart highlights that there are multiple modes of spectatorship. The black theatres provided an alternative space in which new African American audiences reconstituted the racist screen and asserted themselves through spectatorship, generating a collective public identity through this reconstructive film viewing (2003: 653).

Although concerned by a very different audience, and stemming from engagement with a distinct historical and geographical context, the conclusions of Stewart's (2003) study have much in common with those of Boyle (2010, 2009) and Puwar (2007) in her oral history of South Asian audiences in Coventry between 1940 and 1980. Keen to highlight the social role of cinema for this community, Puwar points out that 'the social aspects of the space in which films are played and viewed – the *social* scenes generated in the spaces of cinema – have been overlooked by the prioritisation of scenes on the screen', further arguing that:

‘although audience studies have complicated the multiple ways in which films are read, the socialities and intensities produced among the screen, seats, steps and foyers [and fundamental to understanding cinema] still remain largely unexplored.’ (2007: 255)

In conducting an exploration of two specific cinemas, Puwar (2007) suggests that, ‘the understudied social spaces of cinema have been sites for the constitution of social scenes in the public sphere’ (2007: 255). Indeed, much like the newly arrived Southern black migrants to Chicago described by Stewart (2003), Puwar claims that these cinemas were used by her South Asian participants to develop ‘public selves’ and carve an identity in a ‘racist British society’ (2007: 258).

For Stewart (2003) and Puwar (2007), then, as for Hansen (1991) and Boyle (2010), the public dimension of exhibition is fundamental to understanding cinema. The precarious nature of social identity implied by their analysis resonated with my own findings. The significance of cinema as a seemingly emancipatory *public* space is also emphasised in Giuliana Bruno’s (2002, 1993) work which section 2.7 outlines in detail. Emphasising the importance of architecture to practices of viewing, Bruno (2002) draws on Kracauer’s (1987/1926; 1995/1962) work to suggest that we can be completely different spectators, and have an entirely different ‘movie’ experience, depending on *where* we watch a film. As she explains:

‘one can never see the same film twice. The reception is changed by the space of the cinema and the type of physical inhabitation the site yearns for, craves, projects and fabricates, both inside and outside the theatre.

Thus we can be utterly different spectators when we watch the same film in

different places, for different models of cinema are figured in the architecture of the theatre itself' (2002: 45).

In offering an analysis of two exhibition sites – a palace of distraction and an art deco monument to vision — Bruno argues that these designed spaces configure spectatorship in particular ways (2002: 44).

In her description, however, Bruno (2002) offers a representational analysis and treats the modes of spectatorship encouraged by particular architectures as fixed and inherent to the built form. Although she doesn't draw it out, Stewart's (2003) study suggests a more fluid understanding of the way bodies encounter the built form of viewing spaces. The architectural *design* of black and mainstream theatres was not significantly different, but audience practices and the corresponding engagement with the design formed the nature of the space: in both a de facto segregation was being practised, but in ways that produce quite different experiences for black audiences. In mainstream theatres this segregation fragmented the audience; in black theatres a collective public was formed – each corresponding to different practices of spectatorship that were not determined by the built form but co-constituted with it through practice. The cinemas bought by South Asians in Coventry were similarly spatially indistinct but the 'social cinema scenes' were decidedly different to that found at other cinemas in the city. Perhaps it is not, then, just the *design* of such spaces that we need to acknowledge but rather the ways in which they are co-constituted through practice. I explore this lived understanding of cinema space in Chapter Seven.

The historical periods studied by Puwar (2007), Stewart (2003) and Bruno (2002) are chosen because they represent times of arrival: of South Asians to Coventry;

of Southern black people to the integrated north of Chicago; and of cinema itself. But, while Puwar (2007) emphasises the need to explore cinema's social scenes from the time when cinema-going constituted one of the main public social activities in Britain (a period she sees as having ended) my research suggests that the social element of cinema-going lives on and is co-constituted by the specific spatialities of cinema. This is an idea supported not just by Boyle's (2010, 2009) work but also by Hubbard's (2003a, 2003b, 2002) exploration of the growth of the multiplex, which is to date the most considered study of contemporary exhibition sites to be generated by a geographer.

Citing the multiplex as the reason for the resurgence of cinema-going that has taken place over the past 20 years, Hubbard (2002) sets out to understand how different consumer groups use cinemas. He explores the 'spatial switching of film exhibition' to out-of-town locations to examine why this might encourage more people to attend the cinema (2002: 1240). For his research, Hubbard (2003a, 2003b, 2002) surveyed residents of pre-selected neighbourhoods in Leicester, following up by undertaking in-depth interviews with 15 respondents who he asked to describe their last trip to the cinema (2002: 1250). In doing so, he not only offers an in-depth engagement with the cultural geographies of contemporary cinema-going practices, he also provides a rare example of geographers working with the empirical audience and his work suggests the positive effects of doing so.

For his analysis he adopts the 'dual city' model, which some cultural commentators have claimed epitomises the postmodern condition – one of fragmentation, insecurity and anxiety in which consumption has replaced production as economic force and identity signifier (Hubbard, 2002: 1240). The 'dual city' is demographically mixed but culturally separate, as 'safe' and

'dangerous', 'rich' and 'poor' coexist but are increasingly, spatially, kept separate (Hubbard, 2002: 1243). Having found that the only notable difference between the cinema-going habits of different social groups is their preferred site of exhibition, Hubbard's question becomes whether or not the appearance of multiplexes as new spaces of consumption on the periphery of the city, and their subsequent popularity, are evidence of this fragmentation being written on the landscape (2002: 1243).

In a variety of ways, including thinking about the ontological boundaries of the body (2003a: 261), the ability to drive to the multiplexes (2002: 1254), the perceived safety of the out-of-town sites (2003b: 63), and the avoidance of the 'Other' (2002: 1253), Hubbard asserts that the draw of the multiplex is the same as the draw of the city-centre cinema or any other: it is the 'riskless risk' of sociability in a predictable leisure space with people 'like us' (2002: 1257; 2003a: 267). As Hubbard shows, these distinctions are mapped onto the landscape to produce cultural distinctions between places (see also Jancovich et al, 2003). By extension, this means that exhibition sites also offer the possibility of feeling *out of place*, even in less extreme circumstances than those described by Stewart (2003).

By raising issues of the body and spaces of viewing, and relating them to socio-economic conditions to generate an understanding of contemporary cinema-going, Hubbard provides a productive starting point for exploring contemporary exhibition practices that maintains the importance of cinema as public social space. While, for the most part, he concludes that the distinctions between spaces run along lines of social class, he also indicates a difference among age groups significant for this study.

Taken together, all of the literature on exhibition mentioned thus far highlights the importance of space in two key ways: the position of exhibition sites *across* space, and the constitution of cinema buildings *as* space. While both are significant to my question ‘how are the spaces of cinema constituted?’, the latter forms a larger part of the understanding of cinema as practice developed in this thesis. But while Hubbard (2003a, 2003b, 2002) explores such issues through engagement and comparison between different social groups, I am here enlisting a particular cinema event and audience constituency to explore my questions, and my research suggested a co-constitutive relationship between the ageing body and cinema space that is significant to my understanding of cinema. In generating such an understanding, I draw on insights from geographical gerontology, a literature interested by the spatialities of ageing. This work escapes the understanding of space as a predetermined entity or container for action, offering instead a co-constitutive analysis that has helped me more productively engage and contribute to Bruno’s (2002) insights.

2.6 Cinema architecture reconsidered: practising spaces of ageing.

The geographies of ageing have taken many forms over the last two decades. While this sub-discipline offers wide-ranging work, including the spatial distribution of the global ageing population and the resources available to support them, of concern here are studies that critically examine the spaces of ageing and the associated marginalisation of these landscapes in wider society (Andrews and Phillips, 2005; McHugh, 2000; Laws, 1996, 1995; Harper and Laws, 1995).

A pioneer of this approach, Laws (1996: 92) adopted a spatial analysis of ageing to explore how it might allow for a more nuanced understanding of the bodily,

taking both the corporeal, the social and the relationship between them into consideration. In her analysis, Laws (1996) turns to the reciprocal relationship between the social and the spatial to understand how aged identities are (re)constructed by and reflected in built environments (1996: 91). To take this forward, she carried out a genealogy of the spaces of old age, beginning with the poor houses of modernity through to the 'designer retirement landscapes' of today (1996: 96). Her analysis highlights that these new landscapes of ageing require a very particular 'aged' body, one that remains 'youthful' – much like the older body encouraged by the representations described in the first section (1996: 96). In this sense, the spaces and the status of ageing exist in a mutually constitutive relationship, and the relationship between ageing and place can tell us much about later life.

While Laws (1996) is keen to deconstruct the negative associations of spaces of care, her work nevertheless maintains the discipline's focus on medicalised old age, despite the vast majority of people over 60 and under 85 living independently (Kearns and Andrews, 2005: 16; Hugman, 1999: 184). In an attempt to escape an institutionalised representation of old age, several gerontologists turned to analysing the home (Kearns and Andrews, 2005: 17; Mowl et al., 2000). Moss (1997), for example, undertook research into how women with acute arthritis negotiated their home. In doing so, like Laws (1996), she moved beyond imagining space as a container used by people toward understanding the two as existing in a co-constitutive relationship. Hugman takes this point on and extends it in arguing out that older people develop spatial strategies to conceal the problems the ageing body causes, arguing that: 'the ageing body uses space to manage identity' (1999: 197).

This literature indicates the importance of understanding the spatialities of ageing. It shows how space and place are implicated both in negative portrayals of later life, and in producing a landscape of ageing that has a marginalising effect on older people in contemporary Western societies. But it also suggests that the changing practices of older age influence the shapes and meanings of those spaces. However, while it offers a considered approach to the built environment that is complementary to the analyses of cinema spaces above, I could not find an example of work from gerontology that explores the social and public spaces of ageing. Undertaking such an exploration at the cinema leads to quite different 'spaces of ageing' to those previously explored and to develop my analysis I have drawn on work being done in the geography of architecture, exploring the ways in which buildings are produced through embodied practice (Jacobs and Merriman, 2011; Paterson, 2011; Degen et al, 2010; Kraftl, 2010; Jacobs et al., 2008; Saville, 2008; McCormack, 2008; Jacobs, 2006).

As Lees (2001) explains, 'architecture is about more than just representation. Both as practice and product it...involves on-going social practices through which space is continually shaped and inhabited' (2001: 53). To understand buildings in this way, Lees (2001) draws on recent geographies of consumption, which contest the linear producer-consumer model such as that suggested by Bruno's (2002) analysis of the two cinemas, to argue consumption as a productive process. She argues that such an approach enables us 'to explore the ways that the built environment is shaped and given meaning through active and embodied practices by which it is produced, appropriated and inhabited' (2001: 55). Jacobs and Merriman (2011) similarly argue that by embedding understandings of architecture in practice, we can productively escape conventional understandings that tend to

look at the architect's intentions and the built form as stable and fixed. Engaging architecture in this way enables us to move beyond the 'artefact' to a more 'active and vital' understanding of its being in the world (2011: 213).

Through alternative 'inhabitations', they argue, we become producers. In the course of our everyday lives we continually produce, and are produced by, architectural forms – an approach that offers a productive re-engagement with Bruno's (2002) work and which is representative of the relational production of cinema space that I found in my research. Throughout my fieldwork, I was struck by the ways in which I repeatedly experienced the familiar interior space of the cinema anew through the ways in which participants pre-reflexively engaged its materialities to enable increased mobility. This everyday (re)negotiation and co-constitution of cinema space and embodied practice became fundamental to the understanding of cinema developed in this thesis and while it stemmed predominantly from my engagement with the everyday practice in situ, I draw heavily on the literature discussed here to fully shape the emerging conception of cinema space in Chapter Seven.

However, when at the cinema the material space of viewing does not represent the sum of the spaces that should be considered in asking how are the spaces of cinema constituted? Instead, an engagement with the geography of film and Bruno's (2002) work introduced above suggests strongly that the spatio-temporalities on the screen are significant too.

2.7 Spatialising cinema: the geography of film and revisiting haptic visuality.

The geography of film began with a concern for the relationship between the representation of place and its real-world counterpart. With the arrival of the crisis

of representation, however, the distinction between real and reel is no longer understood as so clear-cut and film has become a legitimate object of study in its own right (Lukinbeal and Zimmerman, 2008; Orueta and Valdés, 2007; Aitken and Dixon, 2006; Escher, 2006). With this shift films have come to be understood as 'the temporary embodiment of social practices that continuously construct and deconstruct the world as we know it' (Cresswell and Dixon, 2002: 3; see also Aitken and Dixon, 2006: 329). Once a marginal concern, Aitken and Dixon (2006: 326) claim that the geography of film has 'come of age' and now engages the wider discipline's understanding of landscape, spatialities, mobilities, scales and networks to offer spatialised analyses of film texts, reconsidering these concepts in light of this engagement (Aitken and Dixon, 2006).

Recently, drawing on postmodernist theorist Fredric Jameson (1995), geographies of film have started to explore these themes by approaching films as a form of 'cognitive map' providing access to 'meaning creation and identity formation' in society (Lukinbeal, 2004: 247). As Clarke (2008) explains, 'film permits an exemplary understanding of the way that society speaks to itself about its spatial constitution' (2008: 102). Films are analysed as a form of social cartography – a map of society's fears, hopes, desires and anxieties that show the ways in which such 'social and cultural meanings are intertwined with space, place, scale and narrative' (Lukinbeal, 2004: 248).

This is an important insight and relates to one of the most enduring interdisciplinary engagement of film studies and geography: that of cinema and the city. Or, to be more precise: cinema and urban (post)modernity (Hallam et al, 2008; Farish, 2005; Dimendberg, 2004; Bruno, 2002; Donald, 1999; Clarke, 1997; Charney and Schwartz, 1995; Natter, 1994; Friedberg, 1993; Hansen, 1991).

These studies engage with the historical specificities (social, political, economic, technological) that gave rise to the modern city and to cinema, arguing that one could not have come to exist without the other (cf. Clarke, 1997: 10 -11; Bruno, 1993). The contemporaneous development of technologies of speed and travel, such as the car and train, as well as the Fordist production lines manufacturing them, were bringing about a changed 'perceptual landscape' that film, as a spatio-temporal medium, could talk to and enhance (Hallam, 2010: 279; Clarke and Doel, 2005; Schönfeld, 2002).

Doel (2008) points out that the development of editing enabled film to cease being purely 'referential' and instead 'manipulate and manufacture space and time', leaving it free to become a 'simulacral medium' that could produce a 'reality-effect', rather than merely a representation, and therefore better talk to the modern condition (2008: 96). In this historical context, Clarke (1997: 3) explains, 'the spectacle of the cinema both drew upon and contributed to the increased pace of modern city life, whilst also helping to normalise and cathect the frantic, disadjusted rhythms of the city'. Cinema 'reflected and helped to mould the novel forms of social relations that developed in the crowded yet anonymous city streets; and both documented and helped to transform to social and physical space that the modern city represented' (1997: 3). But the connection between cinema and the city did not fade with the early days of modernity. Instead, it is considered to have 'paved the way for the postmodern condition' (Clarke, 1997: 6; see also Friedberg, 1993: 2), with cultural theorists from Benjamin to Baudrillard observing 'the curious and telling correlation between the mobility and visual and aural sensations of the city and the mobility and visual and aural sensations of the cinema' (Sheil, 2001: 1).

This has resulted in many works exploring the co-constitutive relationship between film and the city (Hallam, 2010; Roberts, 2010; Webber and Wilson, 2008; Brundson, 2007; Dimendberg, 2005; Neumann, 2001; Ford, 1994; Natter, 1994).⁸ While all of this literature *implies* a viewing body, it is rarely given much attention in analyses. But Bruno's (2002) work, introduced above, combines two of my key interests because she engages debates on the city and cinema to generate a distinctly spatial understanding of embodied spectatorship that develops the arguments from Voss (2011), Sobchack (2004, 2000, 1992) and Marks (2002, 2000) above. Along with Friedberg (1993) and Clarke and Doel (2005), Bruno argues that: 'By changing the relationship between spatial perception and bodily motion ... [modernity's] new architectures of transit and travel culture [produced a new spatiovisuality and] prepared the ground for the invention of the moving image' (2002: 17). Focussing on this spatiovisuality, Bruno emphasises the *journeys* taken at the cinema and conceptualises the female spectator as a 'voyageuse' who, at the turn of the 20th century, found a new public mobility by walking in and through the spaces of film, a journey determined in part by the exhibition site (Bruno, 2002: 56). In this way Bruno spatialises film viewing away from the screen and explicitly brings the spectatorial body in to play.

In finding a path through cinema history by way of architecture, Bruno 'partakes in a shift away from the long-standing focus of film theory on sight and toward the construction of a moving theory of site' (2002: 15). She persuasively insists that we need to intersect conventional film theories with the lived history of space, a

⁸ There have also been a number of studies of cinema-going in this early period that argue this focus on the urban is misguided (cf. Allen, 2007; Fish, 2007).

genealogy that stems back to '[t]he historical deployment of mapping, [which] with its spatial renderings of affects, is film archaeology' (2002: 276). As such, we need to make room for 'the sensory spatiality of film' because our engagement with space, including that of *all* filmic space, 'occurs through an engagement with touch and movement' (2002: 16).

Bruno's (2002) work, then, is complementary to Marks' (2002, 2000) but she extends it to develop a haptic reading of all cinematic space. Importantly, for Bruno, 'haptic' is not just a sense of touch, a tactile engagement, it 'is also related to kinesthesia, the ability of our bodies to sense their own movement through [emotional and geographic] space' (2002: 6). As such, at the turn of the 20th century, Bruno argues that film's haptic visuality offered women of all walks of life a new form of mobility and a route to public space (2002: 77). This argument of course resonates with the historical exhibition studies outlined above but here emotion, understood within a psychophysiological framework as a state of the body, emerges as key to this mobility — we move through filmic space via *emotion*, entering the cinematic world as it enters our emotional one (2002: 250). When we go to the cinema our senses, albeit phantasmagorically, move us — we move through the film as it moves (through) us (2002: 64 -65; 254; 288). Haptic visuality for Bruno, as for Marks, is reciprocal, and emotion becomes the mediating force between the screen and spectator, capable of taking the *voyageuse* elsewhere (2002: 92).

By combining this embodied and spatial understanding of film with an interest in the spaces of viewing, Bruno's (2002) work speaks to many of the concerns my questions raise. By taking her work to the cinema and applying her concepts to

empirical research with audiences I hope to build on Bruno's (2002) insights to develop an understanding of cinema as spatial and embodied practice.

Conclusion: Proposing an understanding of cinema.

As the above begins to suggest, during my research, and in the process of preparing for and writing this thesis, three elements of cinema have recurred that are key to my understanding of cinema. These are: the **film** on the screen, the viewing **body**, and the **space** of viewing. They represent three core themes that run through the literature I have engaged from the key disciplines geography, gerontology and film studies – broadened here to incorporate literature not directly related to, but nevertheless useful in, understanding cinema. But they also relate to three of my research questions raised in the introduction and, as such, provide an indication of the core thematic strands of this thesis. It was this literature, read through Bourdieu's (1977,1990a) theoretical framework, which conjured my questions that, in turn, directed my attention to the thematic strands this thesis.

Taken together, my hope is that this discussion shows the productive points of intersection between work from gerontology, geography and film and audience studies. It is very rare to find a study that incorporates all three elements (body, film, space) that I found key to understanding of cinema. The detailed film analyses offered by gerontology indicate the significance of film representations to perception in everyday life, including perceptions of people and place. This work highlights the politics of such representations and their ability to co-constitute social identity, particularly that of older women. It powerfully evidences the existence of ageism in contemporary culture and suggests the complicity of film representation in the social marginalisation of older bodies. However, when these

overwhelmingly negative perceptions of the relationship between film and ageing – drawn from analyses of film texts – are read in the context of audience data that suggest older people enjoy going to the cinema, I was left wondering, how is representation experienced in practice? A key question for this thesis, and one that helped draw out the significance of the viewing body and cinema space to generating the understanding of cinema explored in the following pages.

The interest in embodied spectatorship within film studies provides provocative theories on how we might think through the body and film, emphasising the significance of the sensing body (Voss, 2011; Sobchack, 2004, 2000; Marks, 2002, 2000). Engaging this work alongside gerontology, however, highlights the need for social difference to be incorporated more fully into such analyses.

Audience studies offers detailed analyses of how social identities relate to shifting media effects, but the body is present only as an external signifier of difference — Boyle's (2010, 2009) work with the audience at watch with baby screenings suggests a more precarious understanding is required. Combined, these approaches suggest the need to consider not just the viewing body when analysing representation, but also the significance of difference in our cinema-going more broadly. As such, it drew me to ask how differentiated bodies might practice cinema differently; a question that, as suggested above, raises the significance of *where* we watch.

A growing number of studies exploring historical exhibition practices indicate the significant shift in approach when we start to think on these terms. By engaging with the material spaces and practices of viewing, the public and social dimensions of cinema are emphasised, and film analyses are exposed as decontextualised readings of texts that are in fact often given shape through lived

audiences. Although this begins to suggest a co-constitutive relationship between the audience and the space of viewing, the insight often ends at the entrance to the cinema itself. In my research I found a distinct embodied relationship to the space of the cinema, in which it seemed to be co-constituted with practice. This approach has much in common with geographical gerontology and for my own analysis I combine insights from this work with learnings from the critical geography of architecture concerned with the constitution of buildings through practice. How, then, might ageing bodies co-constitute the cinema? How are the spaces of cinema constituted?

Cinema is lived. It is embodied and it is spatial. And, while it inevitably involves films, it is not reducible to them, just as our understanding of films should not be reduced to an academic's reading of the 'text' (Smith, 2002). As this suggests, the historical studies of exhibition, such as Hansen's (1991), Stewart's (2003) and Puwar's (2007), as well as Boyle's (2010, 2009), and Bruno's (2002, 1993) work, come closest to the approach to cinema these questions lead me to adopt. However, by learning from their insights, and engaging a variety of other literatures, my work aims to build on rather than reproduce their findings. One of the key ways in which I propose to do so is through the engagement with Bourdieu's (1977, 1990a) theory of practice and the next chapter outlines this framework that has so influenced my understanding of the literature discussed thus far, and which is fundamental to the understanding of cinema that underpins this thesis.

Chapter Three. Engaging with Bourdieu's practice theory

The previous chapter set out my desire to develop an understanding of cinema as practice. In doing so, I aim to combine the many productive approaches to film and exhibition outlined, while drawing together the oft-separated concerns with the body, the film and exhibition – which I predominantly engage spatially. In many ways developing such an approach is to learn from the powerful studies produced on historical exhibition practices, which emphasise the audience, spatialities of exhibition and the film on the screen (Bilteryst, 2012; Puwar, 2007; Stewart, 2003; Kuhn, 2002; Hansen, 1991) and bring their approach to bear on contemporary cinema-going. Boyle (2010, 2009) has already indicated how productive such an application can be, this project seeks to build on her insights through an engagement with practice theory.

Practice theory offers a different starting point to the approaches outlined in the previous chapter, encouraging different questions (Couldry, 2004: 121). However, as Schatzki (2001) has shown, there is no singular theory of practice, and although widely used the term is not universally understood. He identifies four distinct types of practice theory, each an umbrella for a variety of theorists (Schatzki, 2001: 11). The purpose of the current discussion is not to offer an extensive debate on the nature of practice theory or the various different approaches to it, but is instead to spend some time outlining the ways in which the theory of practice I have adopted can help explore the questions posed by existing literatures. Key to this is outlining the framework through which I attempt to develop an integrated understanding of cinema as practice — one that considers the social body of the audience, with the films screened and spaces of viewing as inseparably intertwined.

I am not the first to suggest that we recognise cinema-going as practice, and I begin the chapter with a discussion of Srivinas's (2010a, 2010b, 2002, 1998) instructive research on cinema-going in India. Taking this as a launch point, I move on to outline Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice, via its many critiques, and identify the ways in which it provides a productive theoretical framework through which the project started by Srivinas can be further developed. I hope that this chapter serves as a persuasive testimony to the value that Bourdieu's practice theory holds for understanding cinema. What his theory does not do, of course, is magically provide a definitive answer to the many questions grappled with in work on film and cinema for over a century. But this should not be the aim. Instead I engage his theory as a tool through which, alongside my empirical work, I generate a conversation between important insights in existing literature that are generally kept separate. In generating such a conversation, I hope to offer another piece to the patchwork of understandings – those already developed and those still developing.

1. Cinema-going in Bangalore: a study of cinema-going as practice.

Despite a continuing tendency for studies to explore *either* film (as in the geography of film, theories of embodied spectatorship and cultural gerontology) *or* exhibition contexts (such as the work in film histories, or Hubbard's study of cinema-going in Leicester) there are, as I have already shown, some exceptions to this rule, and I am by no means the first to suggest the value of an understanding of cinema-going as practice(d). In recent years, an anthropology of media has developed, interested in the practices of media consumption and the relationship to, for example, national film cultures, or subversive political movements (cf. Rao, 2007; Fernandes, 2006). In response to this rich work, and the broader 'practice

turn' to which it belongs, media studies theorist Nick Couldry (2004) published a rallying cry for his disciplinary colleagues to adopt practice theory and develop a new paradigm of media research.⁹ The most sustained consideration of cinema-going as practice that I could find is Srivinas's (2010a, 2010b, 2002, 1998) 10-year study in Bangalore, India.

Taking as her starting point the recognition that even work which acknowledges the audience as active consumers neglects the in situ act of watching films, Srivinas (2010a; 2010b; 2002; 1998) sets out to explore what people do when they go to the cinema, and to consider its broader implications (1998: 323). In doing so, she argues that an element of our understanding of film that has thus far been overlooked is the 'way in which it is elaborated in public settings' (2002: 156). While she doesn't engage historical analyses or reception theory, this argument has much in common with such work. She differs significantly, however, in her methodology. Pointing out that most research with audiences is conducted after the viewing event (1998: 324), Srivinas instead – like Boyle (2010, 2009) – undertook participant observation at cinemas across the city, as well as conducting interviews with audience members, exhibitors and producers alike. Her aim is to develop a 'socially situated' understanding of 'actual audiences' (2010b: 291). Unlike Boyle (2010, 2009), Srivinas purposefully approaches cinema-going as *practice*, and in doing so she observes that some of the more significant elements of cinema-going – namely embodied practices, and the viewing habits they imply – are also the most ignored in existing work on contemporary cinema-going (2010b).

⁹ It is perhaps important to note that I do not make any claim to being part of such a 'paradigm' and also that this notion has been criticised even by those who support Couldry's general argument

In taking this as her starting point, Srivinas is not just interested in accessing film-spectator relationships through practice, she is also keen to highlight that the (still) dominant understanding of spectator-as-passive-consumer is based on a decidedly western understanding of cinema-going – more specifically, on researchers' experiences of attending the cinema in the west (1998: 330). Due to the predominantly silent practice of cinema-going in western cultures, she argues, these theorists were unable to access the active elements of film-viewing practices in situ (2002: 172). In India, however, members of the audience loudly communicate with one another, as well as with the film on the screen, so that an understanding of the audience as active is easier to develop (1998: 325). She concludes that far from being passive consumers, the audience's practices are influential in how they (as individuals and collectively) experience the cinema. It is perhaps important at this juncture, then, to explain that I do not present her work here in order to later generate a form of cultural comparison between practices of cinema in Britain and India. Rather, I outline her work because, despite this different cultural context, she offers an approach to cinema similar to that which I attempt to develop in the following pages. For this reason I would like to dwell a while on her arguments here as they resonate with my own research and, I hope, indicate the different knowledges produced when we explore cinema as practice.

Srivinas suggests that Indian audience practices don't just amend film meaning in the moment of viewing; they have amended film form itself. In contrast to Hollywood film in which the opening scene is often crucial to the unfolding narrative and 'requires' a focussed audience, Hindi films often open with a long and loud dance sequence containing very little to do with the overall narrative (1998: 329). This is, she suggests, a creative response to the typical Indian

audience arriving late and chatting loudly before finally settling down. Such a narrative structure also reflects the audience's approach to attending the cinema, whereby the social encounters far outweigh the film as a motivation (2002: 159 – 162). Sociability is also the main draw cited by the new mums in Boyle's (2010, 2009) study, and in Bangalore it results in the common practice of moving in and out of the auditorium while the film is playing: an activity that, Srivinas claims, enables audience members to construct a narrative to suit their interests. They might return, for example, for all of the big dance numbers or action sequences. While she tends to emphasise this visible practice, Srivinas does concede – more in line with viewing practices described in Boyle's (2010, 2009) study – that such 'selective viewing' is not just achieved by actively leaving the auditorium, but also by providing varying levels of attention to the film (2002: 166; 1998: 329).

The sociality in Bangalore cinemas is so forceful that Srivinas (2010b) suggests the cinema becomes a public extension of the domestic sphere. Food concession stands are absent here as (predominantly female) audience members bring their own food, acting as host to family and friends (2010b: 297). Indeed, 'social and interactive viewing' is a fundamental element of cinema-going in India according to Srivinas (1998). Described as when 'audience members make sense of the film through a filter provided by their interactions with others' (1998: 330), this is a valuable insight into the 'perversity of spectators' (Staiger, 2000) enacted at the cinema and provides a way of acknowledging the fluidity of meaning without having to adopt a resistance/submission model. However, Srivinas insists that this type of viewing is unique to Indian cinema-going: 'The emergent collective experience [of India cinema-going] is very different from the emotional experience which contemporary western audiences of Hollywood films may encounter and

expect...In the theatre viewers demonstrate a sociability not seen with audiences of western cinema' (1998: 330; see also 2002: 164).

This links closely to Srivinas's evocative concept of 'participatory viewing', a mode of engagement also understood as fundamental and unique to Indian cinema-going. As mentioned, audiences in Bangalore actively, loudly, engage with the film on the screen and each other. Some audience members even go so far as to watch certain films repeatedly in order to learn songs and dialogue, which then enables them to either join in, or to make well timed jokes that subvert the intended emotion of a particular scene (2002: 168; 1998: 334). When a favourite actor or character appears, people cheer loudly or throw coins at the screen. Participatory viewing, then, describes the ways in which audience members make themselves part of the film-viewing experience. Rather than engaging with the film as a finished product, audiences use it as 'raw material' with which to construct their own meaning (Srivinas, 2002: 164). This practice, Srivinas (1998: 337) suggests, brings the audience closer to the product and (re)positions them as producer rather than consumer, as what the audience does (collectively) 'transforms the experience of watching a film'. Importantly, Srivinas argues that this does not just alter the film's meaning in that moment but instead 'achieves permanence as it becomes lodged in the collective experience that other viewers have of the film' (1998: 341).

When audience participation becomes central to the practice of cinema-going so, too, do the spatialities of cinema — as the people you sit next to have significant impact on viewing experience. The status of cinema as 'public' space is also important as, much like the women in Boyle's (2010, 2009) study, as well as the audiences in the historical studies offered by Puwar (2007), Hansen (1991), Bruno

(2002, 1993) and Stewart (2003), Srivinas argues that '[i]n India cinema theatres become important venues for the enactment and creation of public life...Part of the experience of watching the film is seeing others and being seen.' (1998: 333; see also 2010b: 295-296). It seems striking to me that this diverse range of studies have resulted in similar key conclusions that are often argued by the writer to be unique in some way to a particular historical period or social or cultural group. With more and more work concluding that a fundamental part of cinema-going is the generation of a public or a public identity we need to begin to consider that it is not a property of a specific period or a group but is instead part of the practising of cinema.

Here, due to the spatial politics of the cinema, audience members carefully select where they sit as the stratified seating implies positions in society (2010b: 298 – 299; 2002: 163; 1998: 334). Indeed, many of the middle class women interviewed said that getting a balcony seat was more important than what film they watched (1998: 325). Such spatial segregation also extends to the locations of cinema too, as certain venues become associated with particular audiences and films (2010a: 192). As Srivinas herself notes, her analysis of this geography concurs with Hubbard's (2003a, 2003b, 2002) exploration of cinema-going in Leicester, outlined in the previous chapter. Both find that audiences prefer to attend cinemas with people perceived to be 'like them', and that this de facto segregation is written onto the landscape through the different cinema locations (Hubbard, 2002: 1243; Srivinas 2010b: 294). Further, both Srivinas and Hubbard comment that to cross these spatial boundaries does not just imply social transgression but also challenges the ontological boundaries of the body – something evidenced for

Srivinas in the comments by middle class women that they won't attend certain cinemas for fear of being touched (Srivinas, 2002: 161; Hubbard, 2003a: 261).

Srivinas's work demonstrates the valuable contribution that ethnographic work on contemporary cinema-going practices can make. Her long-term project engages with the relational nature of differentiated bodies at the cinema, the spatialities they co-constitute and the impact that this has on the film, not just in-the-moment of viewing but also in the production process. Through her concepts of social and participatory viewing, Srivinas highlights the in situ meaning making practices, while noting that the audience does not have equal ability to enact all meanings. By developing a geographical understanding of the spaces of cinema, Srivinas develops a complex analysis that has much to offer not just the geography of film and film studies, but also this project.

However, Srivinas does not offer a definition of what she means by the term practice, nor does she engage with the ontological or epistemological repercussions of adopting such a framework. The absence of theory is common across the majority of media ethnography (Hesmondhalgh and Toynbee, 2008; Couldry, 2004). Indeed Postill (2010), who conducted a textual analysis of literature from anthropology looking at media practices, found that almost none of it defined the term or specified which theory of practice they engaged — the term 'practices' was used in 93 different ways across 190 books, without ever being defined (2010: 4). He concludes that, 'If we are to begin to understand what people do with media we need to engage with practice theory' (Postill, 2010: 6). It is this lack of engagement with theory that I think leads Srivinas to make such stark distinctions between Indian and western viewing practices — occasionally slipping into an active/passive dichotomy (2002). For example, in arguing that participatory

viewing practices mean that, 'Indian audiences are consequently closer to the producers and less alienated from the product compared to their western counterparts' (2002: 172), she denies such active viewing to a western audience just because they are silent at the cinema.

As such, while I agree with Srivinas's arguments about the importance of acknowledging that local practices of cinema-going and culturally habituated ways of watching will impact on a film's meaning, the following discussion suggests that if we engage with practice on a theoretical as well as empirical level then the inter-subjectivity, (embodied) biographies and co-constitution of film meaning described by her becomes vital to all practice, not just those in which such elements are notable to the casual observer. Indeed, I hope to show in the discussions of my findings in chapters Five to Seven that some of the elements described by Srivinas also exist in the apparently more subdued cinema auditoria in which I conducted my research.

Acknowledging Postill's (2010) concerns, the next section moves on to introduce the central tenets of theories of social practice before moving on to outline key elements of Bourdieu's (1977, 1990a) work which forms the backbone for my analysis of cinema.

2. Theories of practice.

In introducing his joint edited collection exploring the 'practice turn', Schatzki (2001) explains that there is no one coherent theory of practice, nor any universal understanding of the term. Instead, he identifies four disciplines from which theories have stemmed: philosophy, social theory, cultural theory, and science and technology studies (Schatzki, 2001: 10; see also Postill, 2010; Reckwitz, 2002).

While all approaches offer what Schatzki (2005, 2003) terms a 'site ontology' – an understanding of the social as situated in practice – they do so on quite different terms. Variance exists not just between these four strands but also within them. There are, however, a few key commonalities that are regularly pointed to in Schatzki's work (2005, 2003, 2001, 1997). Broadly speaking these are: first, practice is understood as the location of the social and, as such, constitutes the phenomena we should study;¹⁰ second, both subjectivist and objectivist theories of the social are seen to miss the significance of *tacit* knowledge; third, the majority of practice theorists think predominantly in terms of *human* practices;¹¹ fourth, most understand practice as embodied, although the nature of embodiment is differently understood and; finally, objects and things are important because they mediate practice (Schatzki, 2001: 10).

This list of tendencies is generally understood to apply to Giddens' (1984) structuration theory, Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice, the later outputs of Foucault's (1990, 1988) discourse theory, Butler's (1993, 1990) performativity, Latour's (1987) studies of scientific practice, de Certeau's (1984) work on everyday or 'ordinary' practices, and many more besides (Postill, 2010; Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki, 2001). In locating the social in practice, this diverse group of theorists share a common aim – to overcome the inadequacies generated by the either/or approach inherent to both the objectivist focus on structures and the subjectivist emphasis on individual acts (Postill, 2010: 9; Schatzki, 2005: 467, 2003: 175, 1997: 284; Reckwitz, 2002: 245; Bourdieu, 1977: 2).

¹⁰ Practice is widely agreed to refer to 'arrays of activity', but there is divergence on what constitutes 'activity' and what the relationship between activities and practices is (Schatzki, 2001: 10).

¹¹ This is, of course, with the significant exception of those writing in Science and Technology Studies, or from an Actor Network Theory perspective.

Perhaps the most widely discussed engagement with ideas of practice in contemporary geography is work engaging a non-representational approach. Importantly, despite its name, non-representational theory is not in fact 'a new theoretical edifice' but is instead 'a means of valuing and working with everyday practical activities as they occur' (Thrift, 2008: 112). It is 'A mode of thinking which seeks to immerse itself in everyday practice' (Cadman, 2009: 1). This 'mode of thinking' is an attempt to challenge what counts as knowledge within contemporary geography, and avoid the 'deadening' effect of representational thinking. The aim is to instead generate an approach that emphasises the play, creativity and 'push' of the world, which is understood as 'momentary, as always in the making of *now*' (Thrift, 2000: 556). The interest in practice is not the only element of this thinking that resonates with my work — Thrift (2008, 2004, 2000, 1996) and others engaging his ideas emphasise the importance of the sensing body to understanding the 'event'. The concept of affect is engaged to explore the ways in which we are moved to action without cognition.

Pile (2010) has shown the difficulty of working with, and the inconsistencies in, the understanding of affect put forward in non-representational theory. Key to this is the argument that affect, as a trans- or pre-personal force, is 'non- or pre-cognitive, -reflexive, -conscious and -human' and therefore can neither be spoken about nor captured (2010: 8). Despite this, the main thrust of the approach is that we must pay attention to affect because it is being manipulated and this manipulation is part of an increasingly mediatised political landscape (Thrift, 2004: 66). What this results in is an approach that claims to be 'valuing and working with everyday practical activities as they occur' (2008: 112) but which ends up offering quite distanced analyses (Thrift, 2008: 112, see also 1996; for a criticism of this

'distanced' approach, see Bondi, 2005: 438; Nash, 2000). Indeed, non-representational theories have paid attention to film as part of understanding this manipulation of affect but despite a shift away from studying representation, the focus remains firmly on the screen — not in the everyday practices of viewing (Carter and McCormack, 2006; Thrift, 2004). This points to what I consider the biggest source criticism: that, in the legitimate rally against the dominance of representational thinking, non-representational theory rejects it in entirety and ends up unable to engage the lived practices it claims to be so concerned with.

Thrift (2008) himself is not against representational thinking as such; he is instead against its dominance in cultural geography. His approach is an attempt to 'compensate for this deficit' (2008: 113) by offering a different way of thinking the world that emphasises the almost-theres, the non-cognitive, the imperceptible and that which cannot be represented. While this is an important venture, it has been often pointed out that the difficulty with a focus only on the fluidity and openness of affect, and the importance of the 'creativity' and 'potential' in every 'event', is that it doesn't attend to the different access we have to making such creativity stick, to making the world otherwise. While Thrift (2008: 114) is careful to point out that, '[t]he potential of events is always constrained', the body engaged in non-representational theory is 'both universal and also prior to its constitution in social relations' (Pile, 2010: 11). As Tolia-Kelly (2006: 213) argues, 'The literature on affect is particularly inattentive to issues of power; negated is a focus on geometries of power and historical memory that figure and drive affective flows and rhythms'. It must be acknowledged, for example, that 'a body that is signified as a source of fear through its markedness cannot be free to affect and be affected similarly to one that is not' (Tolia-Kelly, 2006: 215).

To this end, in his analysis of the development and ‘codification’ of ballroom dancing culture in Britain in the early twentieth century, Cresswell (2006: 73) argues that although non-representational ‘thinking has clearly opened up important new avenues for human geography’, its insights would prove even more fertile ‘by thinking of it in tandem with, rather than in opposition to, ideas about representation’. Our understanding of ‘bodily mobility’ must, he suggests, be positioned ‘within larger social, cultural and geographical worlds that continue to ascribe meaning to mobility and to prescribe practice in particular ways,’ anything else risks ignoring the still-powerful impact of representation and ‘inverting the age-old hierarchy of mind (representation, consciousness, culture) over body (the non-representational, practice, nature)’ (Cresswell, 2006: 59). I hope to show that Bourdieu (1977,1990a) enables such an approach by maintaining a sense of the world as constantly being produced – of practice as unstable, determined in the moment and precarious – while also acknowledging the histories and contexts that in different ways place limits on our capacity to practice the world otherwise.

3. Bourdieu’s theory of practice.

Writing a summary of Bourdieu’s theory of practice is a decidedly difficult thing to do. With a career spanning over 40 years and 25 books, Bourdieu never stopped defending, applying, adapting and developing his ideas and, as such, has left the opportunity to take a number of different perspectives from his work (Cresswell, 2002; Wacquant, 1992).¹² I nevertheless hope the following (brief) discussion shows that Bourdieu’s theory has much to offer an understanding of cinema as a spatial and embodied practice.

¹² The key texts engaged with for this thesis are his *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977), *Distinction* (1984), *The Logic of Practice* (1990a), *In other Words: Essays Towards a Reflexive Sociology* (1990b) and *Sociology in Question* (1993)

Engaging with debates in French academia, Bourdieu (1977) was – much like all practice theorists – interested in overcoming the subjective/objective dichotomy dominant within the social sciences. He suggests that while structuralism (like gerontology's media analyses) misses out on the essence of practice by valuing representation over action, phenomenology (as in Sobchack's [2004] work on embodied spectatorship) devalues the importance of structures on the nature of individual practices (1990a: 52). Bourdieu argues that we instead need to acknowledge both objectivist structures and subjective engagement and recognise that they exist in a dialectical relationship. One of his key aims was to break with the notion that the actions of social agents are driven purely by rational conscious thought. This understanding of agency, he suggests, stems from the 'objective' scientific method, which reduces social life to a set of rules, presented in academic texts as the perception schemes of social actors. This interpretation, Bourdieu argues, generates an understanding of practice as fixed and pre-existing an individual's engagement with the world. Much like Thrift (1996, 2000, 2003, 2004, 2008) he advocates instead that practice, or action, should be understood to stem from an embodied, pre-reflexive, 'practical' logic (1977: 3).

While his work is fundamentally humanist, Bourdieu (1977, 1990a) was equally keen to escape subjectivist understandings of the individual as the creator of all meaning (Schatzki, 2001: 14). Although he borrowed certain elements from Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, Bourdieu rejected his tendency to ignore the limiting influence of 'external' structures. He argued instead that in a differentiated society, social class shapes practical logic — we inculcate implicit expectations appropriate to our social position (1977: 81). Along with these expectations, we develop congruous bodily dispositions so that, as suggested above, our material

body is also inescapably social (1977: 94).¹³ What is essential to his theory is that such structures remain implicit and are reproduced through practice precisely because they are not, and cannot be, consciously registered in everyday life, nor in interviews with social scientists (1977: 79). He argues, then, that the source of action:

[R]esides neither in consciousness [as in subjectivism] nor in things [as in objectivism] but in the relation between the two states of the social, that is, between the history objectified in things, in the form of institutions, and the history incarnated in bodies, in the form of that system of enduring dispositions which I call habitus. *The body is in the social world but the social world is in the body.* (1990b: 190)

Habitus, then, is fundamental to Bourdieu's solution to the object/subject binary. It is also a vital concept for the understanding of cinema developed in this thesis.

3.1 Habitus.

As the quote above suggests, dispositions and bodily schemas make up our 'habitus', a concept borrowed from Marcel Mauss, and Bourdieu's term for the subjective incorporation of objective structures through which they are maintained but subtly changed.¹⁴ Mauss (1973/1934) adopted the term to move away from an understanding of bodies as individually determined and explain what he saw as culturally and historically specific 'techniques of the body'. He argued that on

¹³ As Bourdieu explains, 'The word *disposition* seems particularly suited to express what is covered by the concept of habitus [outlined below] (defined as a system of dispositions). It expresses first the *result of an organising action*, with a meaning close to that of words such as structure; it also designates a *way of being, a habitual state* (especially of the body) and, in particular a *predisposition, tendency, propensity or inclination*' (1977: 214, n.1).

¹⁴ For an outline of the historical development of the concept, see Bourdieu 1990b: 12 -13

viewing shared habits within societies and other groups, 'we should see the techniques and work of collective and individual practical reason rather than, in the ordinary way, merely the soul and its repetitive faculties' (1973/1934: 73). He developed the term *habitus* to umbrella the social, psychological and biological elements of 'man' that he saw as 'indissolubly mixed together' (1973/1934: 73 – 74). It is this integrated approach that continues in Bourdieu's work, along with Mauss' notion that these dispositions and habits are developed through pre-reflexive imitation.

In Bourdieu's work, *habitus* is suggested in place of rules as a guiding force for practice. The *habitus* is a 'system of structured, structuring dispositions' that is not just constitutive *of* practice, but constituted *by* it — most profoundly during childhood but *habitus* are continuously shaped across life (1990a: 52). These dispositions do not only influence the pre-reflexive 'feel for the game', they also show themselves in bodily hexis (how we eat, walk, look and so on), which in turn act as social signifiers of capital or 'political mythology realised, *em-bodied*' (1990a: 79). *Habitus*, then, are culturally, socially and historically specific but they also work to reproduce social inequalities, particularly those of the class system. So although '[*Habitus*] is an open system of dispositions that is constantly subjected to experiences, and therefore constantly affected by them in a way that reinforces or modifies its structures', it also exists in relation to social structures which are more often than not reproduced and serve to limit modifications (Bourdieu, 1992: 133). In this way, Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* enables a way to engage theories of embodied spectatorship while strengthening the consideration of difference offered thus far.

Importantly, the deposited expectations of habitus are incorporated into our way of being so that to act in particular ways we don't always have to think about obeying 'cultural norms'. Instead, that obedience is unacknowledged because we are simply doing what *feels* natural: 'The schemes of the habitus, the primary forms of classification, owe their specific efficacy to the fact that they function below the level of consciousness and language, beyond the reach of introspective scrutiny or control by the will' (1984: 468). Fundamental to this is the incorporation of past experiences into the body that influence our *sense* of the future (outcomes) and pre-reflexively guides our practice in the present (1977: 77). This is what Bourdieu terms embodied knowledge, and it is his way of thinking through memory. It is this sedimentation of the past in our present that, for Bourdieu, means there is immanence in practice as there are multiple possible futures, or outcomes (1977: 76). This again echoes the openness of the world insisted on by non-representational theories but here such immanence is limited because although the outcome cannot be predicted, Bourdieu argues that by doing what *feels* natural we more often than not reproduce our position in society.

As such, while the notion of domination (in the sense of dominant and dominated groups) is key to Bourdieu's social theory, he avoids there being a rational intentionality or hierarchical structure to it:

The structures constitutive of a particular type of environment (e.g. the material conditions of existence characteristic of class condition) produce *habitus*, systems of durable, transposable *dispositions*, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring practices and representations which can be objectively "regulated" and "regular" without in any way being

the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them and, being all this, collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating conductor (1977: 72, original italics).

It is important here to underline Bourdieu's use of the term *durable*, and note that it does not imply fixity, despite him often being accused of such an argument.

We can see the implicit learning of the habitus may be similar for those born into similar environments and histories, and Bourdieu argues that this is the genesis of social groupings, especially that of social class, because a 'homogeneity of the mode of production of the habitus (i.e. of the material conditions of life, and of pedagogic action) produces a homogenisation of dispositions and interests' (1977: 64). These result in naturalised groupings of what is right for 'us' and 'them' that serves to reinforce such homogeneity (1984: 480) – a tendency reflected in Hubbard's (2002) analysis of cinema-going in Leicester. These homogenous habitus, however, do not imply that each person sharing a class habitus will be the same, or conduct practices in exactly the same (predictable) way. Instead, Bourdieu insists that individual experiences influence the habitus. The habitus 'is the product of all biographical experience (so that, just as no two individual histories are identical, so no two *habitus* are identical, although there are classes of experiences and therefore classes of *habitus* – the *habitus* of classes)' (1990b: 191, original italics). Classes, then, are the aggregate of individual agents with shared habitus, but their class position should not be understood as *determining* particular behaviours.

As I hope is becoming clear, habitus can usefully complement understandings of embodied spectatorship by emphasising the importance of the sensing, feeling, material body while also exploring the important ways in which it is, in part, shaped socially. For example, we can begin to see that habitus – social made body – will pre-reflexively influence how we *feel* when watching a film. As such, the embodied co-constitution of film in the moment of viewing described by Marks (2002, 2000), Sobchack (2004, 2000, 1992) and Voss (2011) will in part be determined by our (always in process) social position which is, in turn, produced relationally. This particularly enables an extension of Marks' (2002) concept of 'cultural sensoria' as we can begin to see it working within not, just across, national cultures. Similarly, Bourdieu's argument that social position is never determining, never the full story, and that habitus are instead inflected with personal biographies, enables an engagement with Voss's (2011) idea of 'projective additions' without necessarily requiring recourse to cognition. This relates to perhaps the most important and unexpected use of habitus in my understanding of cinema: its temporality.

When memory emerged as a key theme in data analysis I turned to literature on film memory (Kuhn, 2011, 2002, 1984; Puwar, 2007; Stubbings, 2003; Stacey, 1994). This work has been vital in evidencing and emphasising the significance of cinema-going as social practice, challenging the focus on film texts common to much of film studies (Kuhn, 2011, 2002). Such studies, however, are concerned with what memories can tell us about *past* practices of cinema, not what it can tell us about the present. Bourdieu (1977, 1990a) understands habitus as a form of embodied knowledge, a bodily memory. The corresponding sense he gives of the significance of this embodied past on practice, enables a way to think memory not as a looking back but as an instrumental part of the present. Because of this

habitus proved key to my exploration of how film representation might be experienced in practice, and the discussions in Chapter Six developed out of a conversation between literature on film memory and Bourdieu's theory, via my empirical work.

But habitus cannot be understood in isolation, extracted from practice. Instead it is only fully determined, fleetingly, in the moment – through interaction with capital within a field (Edwards and Imrie, 2003: 243). Combining habitus with his concepts of 'capital' and 'field', Bourdieu offers an equation to express the relational nature of practice: '(Habitus) (Capital) + field = practice' (1984: 101). To him 'practice' is the result of various habitual schemas and dispositions (habitus), combined with resources (capital), being activated by certain structured social conditions (field) which they, in turn, belong to and variously reproduce and modify' (Crossley, 2001: 96).

3.2. Capital.

Perhaps his most commonly utilised concept, capital is Bourdieu's way of attempting to escape the economic determinism of work on social class (1977: 172). He argues that, in addition to this oft-cited *economic* capital, social class and societal positions are indicated and determined by social and cultural capital — generally understood as educational capital. In turn this educational capital encourages particular cultural practices that serve to reinforce and maintain the status of that capital. Social and cultural capitals are incorporated into the body through the habitus to form *symbolic* (ie. intangible, unlike economic) capital. This symbolic capital is an embodied expression of our position in society that is pre-reflexively understood by social agents within fields. It is perhaps important to note

that these capitals are not equally or consistently valuable. While economic capital is 'relatively stable', symbolic capital is 'relatively precarious' and its meaning changes significantly across fields.

The relational nature of capital is key to Bourdieu's ability to maintain the importance of social difference, or distinction, while emphasising the precarious, fluid and unstable nature of practice. While he has, as I discuss further in the final section of this chapter, been criticised for offering a deterministic understanding of social difference and reproduction, his formulation of capital is a clear attempt to avoid such an approach. As such, it became fundamental to my engagement with the question 'how might differentiated bodies practice cinema differently?' and offered a way of interpreting such 'difference' as both enduring and emergent, an approach outlined in Chapter Five.

Shilling (2004) draws attention to physical capital (that is the body as capital), arguing that it is vital, both as an aspect of symbolic capital and in the development of economic capital through waged labour and, as such, it is 'key to the reproduction of social inequalities' (2004: 474; see also Bourdieu, 1984, on the hyper physicality of those who rely on manual labour for employment). As Edwards and Imrie (2003) highlight in their work on disabled bodies, this connection between physical capital and economic, cultural and social implies that certain bodily dispositions are viewed as superior, with others judged against them. Read through the gerontology work described in the previous chapter it seems, then, that as we grow older our physical, and with it economic, social and cultural capital become reduced. Ageing bodies become, in the words of Edwards and Imrie, 'bodies without value' (2003: 244).

My own empirical work, combined with my reading of Bourdieu's (1977, 1990a) ideas, challenges such a fixed understanding and begins to suggest a move away from bodily value as always understood in terms of physical ability, to take in ideas of affectual affinity enacted or not between bodies in the moment of practice. Bourdieu's understanding of field proved important in developing such an analysis, as the meaning and value of capital – physical or otherwise – is only determined fleetingly in the moment of practice, in relation to the networks of value encouraged by particular fields.

3.3. Field.

As explained, the value of capital is not fixed but is instead constituted within a field. Bourdieu's concept of field is essentially his way of thinking through cultural context. Fields are *specific structures* of social conditions, some of which people are born into (such as social class) and others which they join (such as academia), although the two types are distinctly interconnected (Crossley, 2004: 6; Bourdieu, 1990a: 68). If habitus is 'history made in to the body' then field is 'history made into a thing', and Bourdieu's concern is with 'the relation created between those two modes of the existence of the social' (1990b: 190-191). Fields are 'historically constituted areas of activity with their own specific institutions and their own laws of functioning' (1990b: 87). As such, 'Each field is a game with specialised stakes', so they have an enduring exclusionary character in which certain *habitus* are legitimated and others marked as illegitimate (Widick, 2003: 687, his italics). Our 'sense of the game' arises out of the fit between habitus and field — we find our 'place' when our dispositions match the expectations immanent in a field: 'when the history in things and the history in bodies are perfectly attuned to one another' (1993: 46, see also 1990a: 190). Fields are not all powerful, though. To remain

viable, they rely on their ability to produce bodies with durable dispositions that enable them to 'recognise and comply with the demands immanent to the field' (1990a: 58). Every field generates the interest which is the precondition of its functioning (1990b: 88).

Bourdieu extends the metaphor of the game to explain how capital relates to the field, suggesting that we can imagine the capitals as tokens, or cards, so that even if we have the number required to play the game, the proportion of those that represent cultural or economic capital, for example, will vary (1990b: 88).

Understood in this way, capitals become sites of struggle, as different players are keen to maintain (or improve) their position in the field. The meanings of our habitual dispositions, then, are determined in the moment of practice – in relation to the capital(s) they imply, and their connotations within the (pre-reflexive) value judgements of a given field (Edwards and Imrie, 2003: 243).

I began through my research to think of both the screen and exhibition site as fields and this concept helped me think through a particular set of social relations I felt being enacted in the collective space of the cinema as I attended matinees for the over-60s. The significance of this collectivity was drawn out in studies from Srivinas (2010a, 2010b, 2002, 1998), Boyle (2010, 2009), Stewart (2003), Hansen (1991) and the concept of field enables a development of these individual arguments which pose such collectivity as specific to the audience being researched towards an understanding of cinema as a field which relies on such collectivity for its durability. This discussion forms part of my understanding of how differentiated bodies might practice cinema differently and is outlined in Chapter Five.

Importantly, the three elements (field, capital and habitus) seen by Bourdieu to determine practice are, in turn, determined by it (and each other). A co-constitutive understanding that emphasises embodiment and asserts that social differentiation is reciprocally produced between bodies and fields. In doing so, it offers a theoretical framework that can enable an understanding of cinema as practice that views film, body and space as co-constituted. Key to this formulation is Bourdieu's understanding of practical logic.

3.4. Practical logic.

Functioning in a practical state means 'below the level of explicit statement and therefore outside the control of logic, and in relation to practical purposes which require of them and give them a necessity which is not that of logic' (1990a: 94). Rather than rational action based on a set of known rules *or* an essential subject capable of generation of such rules, then, Bourdieu argues that we are pre-reflexively driven by practical logic, 'performed directly in bodily gymnastics without passing through explicit apprehension of the aspects 'chosen' or rejected' (1990a: 89). These bodily gymnastics represent our practical sense, which adjusts strategically in different fields depending on distribution of capital. Practical sense is what enables our knowing body to respond appropriately (as our position requires) without ever having to think it through. This sense is relational and it implicitly "selects' certain objects or actions... in relation to 'the matter in hand'" (1990a: 89 – 90). However, it also induces 'an identity', so that while practical sense contains infinite potential practices, the ones that take place stem from the relation between habitus and field, a relation that cannot be predicted (1990a: 90), an idea which proved not just influential on my understanding of social difference but also the overarching understanding of cinema proposed in this thesis.

As I have shown, each field or 'game' has its own immanent demands and, as such, its own immanent logic. But just as a field relies on agents with habitus appropriate to that logic, so engagement with them ceases to make logical sense once the related practices are no longer of practical 'use'. Bourdieu chooses the seemingly contradictory term 'strategy' to explain this process. Key to understanding this is the acknowledgement of practical time – the fact that, in practice, we don't often remove ourselves from a situation to reflect on it and make a rational decision about 'what do next'. Instead, we act spontaneously through our practical *sense*. This generates a distinct temporality to practice. As Bourdieu explains, 'because it is entirely immersed in the current of time, practice is inseparable from temporality, not only because it is played out in time, but also because it plays strategically with time and especially with tempo' (1990a: 81). In arguing this last point, Bourdieu's work offers a way to pay attention to the moment of practice while avoiding the perceived negation of history that non-representational theories have been criticised for (Tolia-Kelly, 2006):

'The idea of practical logic, 'a logic in itself', without conscious reflexion or logical control, is a contradiction in terms, which defies logical logic. This paradoxical logic is that of all practice, or rather of all practical sense. Caught up in the 'matter in hand', totally present in the present and in the practical functions that it finds there in the form of objective potentialities, practice excludes attention to itself (that is, to the past). It is unaware of the principles that govern it and the possibilities they contain; it can only discover them by enacting them, unfolding them in time' (1990a: 92).

This, I hope to show, has much to offer understandings of lived audiences at the cinema. It seems that it is 'practical time' that Sobchack (2004, 2000) captures in

her description of her instant, bodily, responses to the opening scenes of *The Piano*. Moreover, it suggests that these senses and perceptions are the result of habitus (see Bourdieu, 1984: 21) as much as they are the result of meaning inherent to the film, a notion that also chimes with Voss's (2011) argument that the film and the spectator should not be considered as separate elements of the viewing moment. Instead the two are inseparably intertwined in the creation of cinema. As suggested above, this influenced my understanding of the function of memory at the cinema and relates to my questioning of how representation might be experienced in practice, discussed in detail in Chapter Six.

Bourdieu leaves room for – indeed, at times emphasises – the fragility of habitus, field and capital. It must be said, however, that for him our habitus will in general be in tune with the fields with which we engage, because our habitus drives us to those with which we ‘fit’. However, Bourdieu acknowledges that there are instances in which this is disrupted, for example as a result of an individual moving from one type of society to another, or entering a field not congruous with habitus (as Bourdieu feels he did when entering academia from a working class background). Such disruption generates a ‘crisis of habitus’, exposing the taken for granted history that positions us (1990a: 62). Bourdieu rarely discusses crises of habitus but when he does so, it is often in terms of age. It is because of this that he offers the concepts of age-class and modes of generation – both of which have much relevance for this project and to understanding the practical logic of cinema-going for my participants (and me).

3.5. Age-class and modes of generation.¹⁵

Bourdieu's interest in age-class stems from the shifting value of cultural capital across generations, disrupting the automatic inheritance of equal social standing and displacing expected positions within fields. One of the key ways in which Bourdieu understands the differentiation between the age-classes to manifest itself, and be produced, is in the relative value of educational capital. He points out that as more people gain a particular qualification, such as a university degree, it is 'ipso facto devalued' and it 'loses still more of its value because it becomes accessible to people 'without social value'' (1993: 98). Education is just one area, but Bourdieu argues that we can also see this differentiation between modes of generation in fashion, music tastes, food, economies and so on. Such shifts in cultural and symbolic capital can mean that certain dispositions are more in tune across the usually dividing parameters of social class, than they are across generations. In fact, after occupation, age was the next most significant common factor in cinema-going practices of participants in Bourdieu's *Distinction* (1984), an in-depth study of cultural practices and the judgements of taste.

As Bourdieu explains:

'[P]ractices are always liable to incur negative sanctions when the environment in which they are actually confronted is too distant from that to which they are objectively fitted. This is why generation conflicts oppose not age-classes, separated by natural properties, but habitus which have been produced by different *modes of generation*, that is, by conditions of

¹⁵ Bourdieu sometimes uses age-class and generation interchangeably and at other times he uses age-class to refer to chronological age and generation to refer to a symbolic grouping along the lines of generational cohort. Here, I have tried to be consistent with his usage.

existence which, in imposing different definitions of the impossible, the possible, and the probable, cause one group to experience as natural or reasonable practices or aspirations which another group finds unthinkable or scandalous, or vice versa.' (1977: 78)

These socially defined temporalities produce 'boundaries that define age-groups' but also 'the limitations imposed at different ages' (1977: 165). The differentiation of bodies along age lines moves beyond a simple process of decline, to instead understanding older bodies as materially different because their bodies speak of habitus generated decades ago, they relate to past 'norms'. What this means is that, although 'old' is considered a fixed category, in fact the various forms that 'old' takes will be significantly different across generations as the embodied habitus that is carried and developed across life will be different for somebody born in 1920 to 1940, and a different material ageing body is produced.

When it comes to modes of generation, Bourdieu's concern is with the disadvantages faced by younger rather than older people. Despite this difference, I think that his understanding of age-class, or *modes of generation*, provides a useful framework for thinking through the cultural construction of the category 'old', and all its associated negative connotations in contemporary western society, without losing sight of the corporealities of ageing. Through his concept we can recognise that the *material* body does not just age biologically but also symbolically, as those dispositions inculcated across life produce a body that speaks of a particular (out-dated) generation. Cultural gerontology has shown us that in contemporary British society symbolic (bodily) capital reduces as we age, shifting our sense of the game and position within fields. I am interested in how this plays out in those places associated with particular fields and bodies.

Accordingly, the next section engages an element of Bourdieu's work on practice that is not frequently discussed – his understanding of inhabited place. I hope to show that this can usefully complement, and be complemented by, ideas arising out of the critical geography of architecture.

3.6. Space through the body: spatialities of practice and the Kabyle House.

Bourdieu has faced significant criticism for failing to be sensitive to spatial differences or the effect of space and place on symbolic capital (Holt, 2008: 234 – 236; Kelly and Lusi, 2006). He has also been accused of offering a literal understanding of space (Haimes, 2003). However, some geographers have highlighted the relevance of his concepts to discussions of spatiality in everyday life (Hillier and Rooksby, 2005; Casey, 2001a, 2001b; Painter, 2000). This work highlights that Bourdieu's emphasis on the corporeal, material element of the body incorporates the phenomenological emphasis on being-in-the-world and implicitly suggests that space must be understood as embodied (Low, 2003). What is more, his argument that habitus (as a system of bodily dispositions) and practice exist in a co-constitutive relationship intersected by field and capital generates a permeable understanding of the social body that implicitly problematises notions of space as a pre-existing fixed entity (King, 2000). Indeed, Holt (2008) argues that Bourdieu's embodied understanding of social capital makes it into a distinctly spatial entity and salvages the concept for productive use within geography (see also Casey, 2001a).

In his preface to *The Logic of Practice* (1990a), Bourdieu himself lists a concern with the spatial dimension of practice as one of his key contributions (1990a: 9). Bourdieu's (1977: 89) understanding of the relationship between the built

environment and the learning body is perhaps most useful for my attempts at exploring how the spaces of cinema are constituted. In a characteristic treatment, Bourdieu draws on our practical relationship to space in order to evidence the failure of theoreticians to recognise the embodied nature of practice. He argues:

‘The gulf between this potential, abstract space, devoid of landmarks or any privileged centre... and the practical space of journeys actually made, or rather journeys actually being made, can be seen from the difficulty we have of recognising familiar routes on a map or town-plan until we are able to bring together the axes of the field of potentialities and the “system of axes linked unalterably to our bodies, and carried about with us wherever we go”, as Poincare puts it, which structures practical space into right and left, up and down, in front and behind’ (1977:2).

Space to Bourdieu is both material and symbolic and is inseparably related to the generation of a body appropriate to habitus. By arguing against abstracted or representational treatments of space and trying to instead consider the ways in which it is lived through practice he shares an aim with many contributing to the geography of architecture discussed in the previous chapter. But his work enables a combination of the fluidity of space outlined in that literature and implied in Stewart’s (2003) study, while paying attention to the spatial politics highlighted in her work and explored by Hubbard (2003a, 2003b, 2002). This approach proved fundamental to the understanding of space that emerged out of my research and which became key to my formulation of cinema as practice. His most considered application of this understanding is in an analysis of the logic of the Kabyle house (1977, 1990a).

While, as Bourdieu himself concedes, his analysis of the layout of the house is still ‘within the limits of structuralism’, it is this approach that enabled him to explore the symbolic reinforcement offered by the structure of the house to the gendered divisions of Kabyle society (1990a: 316, *n. 1*). This structuralist description is only a starting point, as the subsequent mentions of the house scattered throughout his *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977) and *Logic of Practice* (1990a) offer a more complex understanding in line with his engagement of practice. The built structure – and its structured symbolism of ‘society in miniature’ – becomes an ‘implicit pedagogy’ for young bodies as they move through the house and, in so doing, ‘learn’ their place in society and develop a body appropriate to it (1977: 94). But Bourdieu is keen to emphasise that, while these representational analyses of spaces can tell us much about the structure of society, the structures extracted in such analyses are not determining, nor are they the full story:

‘The house, an *opus operatum*, lends itself as such to a deciphering, but only to a deciphering which does not forget that the “book” from which the children learn their vision of the world is read with the body, in and through the movements and displacements which *make the space within which they are enacted* as much as they are made by it’ (1977: 90, my italics)

Our (gendered) embodied relation to inhabited space across life generates differentiated embodied perception which is both produced by and (re)productive of the habitus (1990a: 280). As such, the meaning of the Kabyle house is not fixed. Instead it is relational, and ‘may, in different universes of practice, have different things as its complementary term and may therefore receive different, even opposed, properties’ (1990a: 87). While this in part is still reliant on a structural analysis, what I found important is that the material body becomes fundamental to

the lived constitution of space, implying that we cannot understand one without the other. While we can learn about structures through a representational analysis of built forms, the meaning and function of such structures do not pre-exist the encounter with practising bodies. We must understand space through the embodied practice with which it is constituted. In this way, while he might not quite take the step himself, Bourdieu enables a move beyond a structuralist understanding to one which understands the built environment as co-constituted by practising bodies and talks to the approach adopted by the critical geography of architecture (Jacobs and Merriman, 2011; Lees, 2001).¹⁶

While these geographies already engage practice theory, analyses tend to be undertaken in the framework of actor-network or non-representational theories (Jacobs and Merriman, 2011; Degen, 2011; Rose et al, 2010; Jacobs et al, 2008; Saville, 2006; Lees, 2001). As such, they are particularly interested in the ways in which the collision of bodies and things enact fleeting (affective) 'building events' through different practices. The significance of embodied difference to the types of 'building events' available to us, however, is of less concern. Bourdieu can, I think, help with thinking through the impact of social difference without disrupting the insights offered by existing literature. His co-constitutive understanding of the Kabyle house and practising bodies emphasises that, through such collisions, it is not just space that is constituted. Its materiality also implicitly teaches the practising body its place, further generating the habitus – the site of social difference. In this way it becomes clear that while possibilities of enactment may be infinite, bodies do not have equal capacity to enact.

¹⁶ While Bourdieu (1977: 89) sees the spatial form of implicit learning as particularly significant to non-literate societies, the geography of architecture shows such an analysis can be applied more broadly.

As this discussion suggests, I find Bourdieu's framework a productive one. But it is not beyond substantial criticism and it is important to acknowledge the challenges made to his theory in order to fully explore the implications of adopting it in this thesis. I would like to take a bit of time here to outline the key criticisms aimed at Bourdieu (1977,1990a) as well as some of the defences mounted on his behalf. My aim is not to claim no such issues exist in his theory but rather to suggest how I try to overcome them in my work, and why I think his ideas are nevertheless productive for thinking through cinema as practice.

3.7. Where did all the agency go? Criticisms and defenses of Bourdieu.

There are many criticisms levelled at Bourdieu's theory of practice. He is accused of prioritising reproduction over transformation and, as such, leaving no room for social change or social movements and his theory is often taken to be a badly disguised economic determinism in which all capitals and therefore social positions are, in the final analysis, reduced to their economic element (cf. Holt, 2008; Nash, 2003; Bridge, 2001). Of more relevance to this project is that, in his emphasis on the un-thought logic of practice, he is accused of denying the power of consciousness and reflexivity in human action. Bourdieu's insistence that objective structures are embodied through the habitus in the form of practical logic but not conscious rules is seen to place the emphasis on pre-reflexive action at the cost of consciousness, reproducing the very mind/body dualism he attempts to overcome, albeit in an inverted form (Noble and Watkins, 2003: 521). Bourdieu's understanding of habitus is seen to be key in generating a passive subject as it emphasises the unconscious reproduction of structures and generates an on-going cycle of passive reproduction through the body (Nash, 2003; Butler 1999). This lack of attention to consciousness also prevents him from accounting for the

adoption of habitus or entry to a field and, as such, does not account for the genesis of habitus or aspiration (Bridge, 2003; Noble and Watkins, 2003; Lovell, 2000). This is a criticism with significant repercussions for the aim of this project as it highlights the potential for Bourdieu's theory to reproduce the passive spectator that work on film has struggled to escape.

Both Schatzki (1997) and Butler (1999) offer critiques that suggest this passivity stems from what they perceive to be a rigid understanding of field. Butler (1999) argues that fields are presented in Bourdieu's theory as though they offer pre-determined limiting structures, thus undoing the more unstable, fluid immanent understanding of practice through the habitus (1999: 114). In confronting the same issue, Schatzki (1997) proposes that this makes Bourdieu's understanding of the organisation of practices problematic because, in his theoretical work at least, he insists that 'it is not with practices but with the objective conditions established by them that dispositions are homologously structured' (1997: 289). Schatzki does not see this problem as insurmountable, instead suggesting that this (unintentionally) rigid formulation can be improved by instead linking the structure of the habitus with the multiple potential actions – to Schatzki, 'action manifolds' – it produces (1997: 290).

I hope to have shown in the previous discussion, however, that while much of what drives practice might be pre-reflexive this does not mean we are passive bodies. Instead, embodied practice in Bourdieu's understanding is *active*. Decisions are made in practice, but they do not necessarily enter into cognition and nor are they necessarily based on choice. Instead, they are made in practical time, by the intelligent body. While for Bourdieu habitus more often than not reproduce the

social order, it is this active understanding of practical logic that means he is also careful to insist that the outcome of practice is never a forgone conclusion.

What is important to me here, though, are not the ins-and-outs of different readings of Bourdieu. Instead, it is that almost all criticisms point out that their reading goes against Bourdieu's intention, and offer ways in which that initial intention might be in the end fulfilled. As such, while I think that this interrogation of Bourdieu's theory is valuable, it also highlights to me the opportunities that his framework offers. If, in his attempt to develop a total theory of the social, Bourdieu failed to fully carry through the benefits of his practice theory into his conceptual framework, then it becomes a productive task to carry them through ourselves through empirical analyses of practices. Indeed, as Noble and Watkins point out, just because 'Bourdieu had specific uses for the term [habitus] and specific theoretical enemies in mind... does not mean we can't rehabilitate the concept for other uses' (2003: 526; see also Postill, 2010: 16). However, as Holt (2008: 234) warns, we should not integrate reflexive action at the cost of once again valuing it over the 'pre-reflexive level at which much social reproduction occurs'. Instead, we need to maintain the importance of the social body that is so insisted upon in Bourdieu's understanding of practice.

By taking the essence and intention of Bourdieu's theory – which, as I hope to have shown here, leaves space for active human agency (Bourdieu, 1990a: 57; see also Wacquant, 1992) – into an analysis of practice we can attempt to extend his valuable insights. Particularly since, as Warde (2009) points out, although Bourdieu's concepts are often used as though they present a total theory of practice, Bourdieu himself, 'at least in his early career, intentionally invented concepts for use, and almost in use, to deal with particular substantive analyses,

rather than constructing an architecture of concepts in the manner of a pure theorist' (2009: 242, see also Moi, 1991: 1017).

Feminism's engagement with Bourdieu has largely been along these lines, embracing (although not uncritically) those concepts useful to the concerns of contemporary feminism, despite Bourdieu's own masculinist assumptions and marginalisation of gender as an issue within practice (Adkins, 2004; Lovell, 2000; McNay, 1999; Moi, 1991).¹⁷ In a powerful argument for the productiveness of his theory, Adkins (2004) points out that feminism now engages gender differently, so it matters less that Bourdieu's theory does not attend to it. Instead, she suggests, we should focus on those elements of his work that do speak to the concerns of contemporary feminism – an interest in embodiment, temporality, spatiality and place (Adkins, 2004: 5). Moi (1991) suggests, and Adkins concurs, one of the ways a fixed understanding of gender can be usefully disrupted and thought through Bourdieu is to align it with his thoughts on class, or capital – as something that is a structuring element of all social fields and is relationally produced with those fields as they generate practice (Adkins, 2004: 6; Moi, 1991: 1035).

As feminism moves more towards an intersectional analysis, Bourdieu's theory also offers a way to pursue studies of class inequalities between women and disrupts the notion of a homogenous womanhood (Lovell, 2000: 21; Adkins, 2004: 7; Moi, 1991: 1035), an approach that became key in my own research. Further, the integrated understanding of the body offered by his interpretation of habitus breaks not just with the structuralism that feminists are keen to escape but also 'the Cartesian traditions of social theorising (which of course have been named by

¹⁷ He did address issues of gender directly in *Masculine Domination* (2001), offering a scathing critique of feminist scholarship (Lovell, 2000: 27, fn 1) but acknowledging that gender is key to social inequality.

feminists as both exclusionary and normative)' (Adkins, 2004: 11). In this way, for Lovell (2000) and McNay (1999), Bourdieu's work enables an escape from the limitations of both structural analyses and the voluntarism that often appears as an alternative. He enables, they suggest, 'tightness of the constraints which bind women into the social circumstances in which they find themselves' (Lovell, 2000: 18), without seeing such circumstances as determining and pre-determining the outcome of practice (see also McNay, 1999: 104).

While, then, feminist writers emphasise the potential of Bourdieu's theory they do not do so uncritically. One of the key additions to the above criticisms is that Bourdieu fails to attend to emotion – a significant concern for contemporary feminism (Adkins, 2004). Skeggs (2004) argues that Bourdieu's habitus cannot do so because the on-going accumulation of capital is fundamental to his understanding, and emotion has no clear value. In the same volume, however, Reay (2004) argues that, through empirical work, we can amend Bourdieu's understanding of symbolic capital to include the emotional capital he ignores, and position it alongside social and cultural capitals. Probyn (2004) meanwhile proposes that we understand emotion as part of embodied knowledge and practical logic – it is generated by, and generative of, practice in relation to the sedimented embodied pasts of the habitus. For her, this dimension of the habitus is more accurately described in terms of affect and she re-engages Mauss to develop a notion of *affective habitus*. In my research, the affective dimension of habitus became significant for understanding cinema. I understand this as the accumulation across life of capacities for affect that position us in particular ways. Bourdieu (1977, 1990a) himself, I think, accounts for this in his emphasis on the

bodily *sense* of practical logic, one that is relationally produced with capital, field and habitus.

These amendments offer a strengthening of ideas implicit within Bourdieu's own theorising and once again indicate the potential of his wide-ranging work. The ability to read different approaches into his writing seems to result from the syncretist nature of his theory. And, for all of the critics, Bourdieu has an equal number of writers who defend his work (see, for example, Holt, 2008; Adkins, 2004; Hunter, 2004; McNay, 1999). In trying to combine the opposing philosophies of objectivism and subjectivism, Bourdieu sometimes fails to be consistent in his approach, leading to contradictions within his theory. Despite this, I hope that the above discussion indicates that if we engage the essence of his intention, and main thrust of his theory of practice, Bourdieu's work can be a useful tool in my attempt at developing an understanding of cinema as practice. It is an understanding that moves beyond solely representational thinking to emphasise the significance of lived embodiment while nevertheless maintaining an interest in history, in context and in social difference (Lorimer, 2008: 554; Cresswell, 2006: 59).

4. Conclusion: what Bourdieu's theory offers to my questions, and how it poses another.

Srivinas's (2010a, 2010b, 2002, 1998) long-term study of cinema-going in Bangalore discussed in the first section of this chapter serves as a provocative example of the different perspective gained when we access cinema as practice. However, she does not define her understanding of practice and nor does she explain the approach to practice that she has adopted in her research. This is

problematic because, as I have shown, 'practice' is by no means a universally understood term. The theory of practice one adopts for a study will have significant implications for the understandings generated. My hope is that this chapter serves as a persuasive argument for the adoption of Bourdieu's theory for developing an understanding of cinema as practice, and exploring the questions asked in this thesis.

Through habitus, and the related concepts of capital, field and practical logic I developed an approach to the question of how differentiated bodies might practice cinema-going differently that suggests such difference is, in part, enacted through practice and that the two are co-constituted. Bourdieu's (1977, 1984) discussion of modes of generation reinforces the sense I had of a precariousness to 'difference' when at the cinema, and to the sense that different dimensions of habitus will come to the fore depending on practical logics in a particular field. Such a relational understanding enabled me to engage older participants and explore the ways in which cinema became significant to the constitution of a – fleeting – collective identity. This argument is outlined in Chapter Five. Bourdieu's concept of habitus and its associated practical logic – a form of embodied memory or knowledge, which pre-reflexively drives practice in the present – enables a cultural analysis of the materially ageing body and has much to offer ideas of embodied spectatorship and its ability to incorporate the concerns for social difference exemplified in gerontology's film analyses.

In this way, as memory emerged as a key theme in my data, habitus provided a way of connecting it to the sensing body and its differentiation. This conception of the body proved key to my exploration of representation in practice and resulting formulation of cinematic habitus, outlined in Chapter Six. Finally, Bourdieu's

incipient understandings of space through the Kabyle house, and the inherent spatiality of his theory more broadly, enables an understanding of the spaces of cinema that honours the structures of difference highlighted in representational analyses while insisting that space must be understood through the body.

Bourdieu's work suggests that the meaning and shape of space cannot be understood in isolation of practice, as it is not pre-determined or fixed but is instead enacted in the present through a body shaped by its past and working towards a future. Space should not be understood as a pre-determined container for action. Important though representational analyses are, the meaning of space literally takes shape through the lived body, and in my research this seems to be the case for both the material space of the exhibition site, and the spatialities of the screen. This approach, then, provided a way of exploring the constitution of the spaces of cinema that became significant to the conception of cinema offered in this thesis, and it is explored fully in Chapter Seven.

Despite the criticisms outlined above, Bourdieu's theoretical framework has been widely used within the social sciences. Like Srivinas, who herself points out that audiences in India 'provide an extreme example of active viewing, their routine practices in theatres being overt and explicit' (1998: 325), most researchers engaging with Bourdieu's theory through empirical work explore practices that are explicitly physical, or involve an element of learning distinctly bodily skills across time (such as boxing and tennis, rather than reading or learning maths). The literature includes explorations of glass-blowing (O'Connor, 2006), disability (Allen, 2004; Edwards and Imrie, 2003), boxing (Wacquant, 2005), circuit training (Crossley, 2004) and ballet (Wainwright and Turner, 2006). These studies offer valuable insight into the genesis of *habitus* through practice, and the incorporation

of the social into the body, as well as those ‘moments of crisis’ in which the *habitus* needs to be realigned to changes in or between fields. They do, however, leave an important part of Bourdieu’s practical theory unexplored. As Holt notes in her discussion of embodied capital, the focus on explicitly bodily practices has meant that ‘the host of embodied inequalities reproduced, and potentially transformed, through everyday practice, have not been fully illuminated’ (2008: 235).

Indeed, one of the powerful nuances of Bourdieu’s theory is that his bodily understanding of practice is not limited to those practices that have a visibly evident and oft-acknowledged bodily element. Instead, *all practice is embodied* and everything we do is produced by and produces bodily affects. What is more, Bourdieu’s (1977) theory also enables us to recognise this co-constitution even when it is not directly observable, as in Srivinas’s (1998) study. Bourdieu’s (1977: 6; 1990a: 55) suggestion that embodied memories influence our expectations of the future, implicitly determining the decisions we make in the present and, as such, practice offers a way of developing an embodied understanding of the ‘perversity of spectators’ (Staiger, 2000), without reverting to a conscious rejection of representation on the part of the audience (1990a: 56; 1977: 83). However, these theoretical claims carry significant methodological implications and considerations. With so many social science methodologies based around interviews or observation, how can we pick up on the pre-reflexive embodied nature of practice when we are interested by a practice that is not overtly physical? How can we empirically explore practice? This is the fourth and final question being asked in this thesis and one that I try to address in my methodology. It is to this that I turn in the next chapter.

Chapter Four. Methodology: Bourdieu's problem with methods, and choosing to study cinema at the cinema

In the previous chapter, I outlined some of the key concepts in Bourdieu's (1977,1990a) theory of practice and argued that they can be useful in generating an understanding of cinema as practice that attends to the film on the screen, the body in the audience and the space of viewing — all key to this project. Taken as a guiding force rather than a rulebook, Bourdieu's framework can offer ways of exploring most of my research questions. But while his work offers opportunities for the study of cinema, his emphasis on a pre-reflexive sense of the game presents significant challenges to empirical work keen to explore it. Attempts to access such embodied knowledge have long been a consideration for researchers from a variety of perspectives but quite how we attend to this through empirical work is still not entirely clear (Simpson, 2011; Hopwood, 2010; Thrift, 2008). Useful though it is for exploring my research questions, then, Bourdieu's theory also prompts another — how might we empirically study practice? It is in part this question to which this chapter speaks by exploring my methodology in theory and in practice.

Because Bourdieu's (1977,1990a) theory is so embedded in a critique of conventional methods, I begin with an overview of the particular methodological problems posed, and the commitments implied for researchers engaging with his understanding of practice. The final section of this first part outlines my primary method, the go-along (Kusenbach, 2003), and the reasons it seemed appropriate for considering the research questions being explored in this thesis. Having thus used existing literature to explore the 'why' of my chosen methodology, the second

section is given over to the 'who, what, when, where, and how' of my fieldwork. I conducted research with women who attended matinees for the over-60s. Adopting the go-along method led me to join participants on their trips to the cinema, and I also conducted separate informal interviews. After providing a more detailed outline of the methodology adopted, including a description of these research events, the sites of research, recruitment and participants, as well as my data analysis procedure, I use my experience to reflect on the go-along and assess the method's usefulness in empirically studying practice, particularly that of cinema.

1. Methodology in theory: the go-along and Bourdieu's methodological concerns.

It is impossible to extract the research questions I pose in this thesis from the theoretical framework I adopt. My interaction with arguments on method stems from an engagement with Bourdieu's critique of conventional social science methods, which he perceives as unable to capture the most essential elements of practice. As such, in exploring the methodology developed to answer my questions, it is first important to outline those concerns it attempts to overcome.

1.2 Bourdieu on method

'What is essential goes without saying because it comes without saying' -

Bourdieu, 1977: 18

In the first section of his *Outline of a theory of practice* (1977), Bourdieu offers a critique of the 'objective' techniques dominant in the social sciences. Arguing that 'the "impartial spectator" [is]... condemned to see all practice as spectacle' (1977:

1), Bourdieu criticises the tendency for researchers to reduce social life to a set of rules. These rules, he claims, are presented in academic texts as the perception schemes of social actors, generating an understanding of practice as fixed and pre-existing an individual's engagement with the world (1977: 3).

To Bourdieu, traditional research techniques leave 'unsaid all that goes without saying' as social agents do not recognise those implicit structures that govern their practice, and we do not have the tools with which to access them (1977: 18). As Bourdieu explains, 'simply because he [sic] is questioned, and questions himself, about the reasons and the *raison d'être* of his practice, he [sic] cannot communicate the essential point, which is that the very nature of practice is that it excludes this question' (1990a: 91). He argues that we need to escape the assumption that practice can be *told* and turn to a consideration of bodily communication – that which is unsaid (1977: 15). As explained, the bodily dispositions of the habitus show themselves in bodily hexis – how we look, walk, eat, talk and so on, and their connotations provide insight into lived practice, beyond the reification of reflexive talk (1990a: 79).

Bourdieu's theory, then, poses two connected problems for empirical researchers. First, we must avoid the tendency, particularly common in participant observation, to allow the rigid logic of theory to eclipse the ambiguous logic of practice and cease 'substituting the observer's relation to practice for the practical relationship to practice' (1990a: 34). Second, and relatedly, we must not lose sight of the embodied knowledge that pre-reflexively co-constitutes practice.¹⁸ The first of

¹⁸ It is perhaps important to say that Bourdieu's own empirical research is criticised for reproducing the very positivism he tries to overcome (Hamel, 1997; Griller, 1996). While he adopted ethnographic methods for his early work – such as his study of the Kabyle that fed into his theory of

these is now widely recognised as in the time since Bourdieu (1977) published his theory of practice, anthropology and the wider social sciences has undergone a 'crisis of representation'. Feminist literature has been fundamental to these critical discussions of the politics surrounding what counts as 'valid' knowledge. Drawing on and generating anti-foundationalist and postmodern philosophies feminists have – much like Bourdieu (1990a: 36) albeit through a different framework – disrupted the notion that methods can access essential objective truths by emphasising that all knowledge is situated (in particular bodies and social space) and partial (Moss, 2002; Rose, 1997; Haraway, 1988). In response to this, there have been attempts to incorporate the researching body into findings as a way of writing reflexively (Longhurst et al, 2008; Sharp, 2005; Bondi, 2003; Nast, 1998).

In geography, the question of how we capture embodied knowledge has come increasingly into focus as the influence of non-representational theory gains momentum (Simpson, 2011: 343; Latham, 2003; Thrift, 2000). As I have explained, this approach emphasises affect and the significance of the sensuous body in everyday practice, and claims such dimensions of social life have been inadequately explored by 'dead, dead, dead geographies' incapable of engaging the lived-ness of life (Thrift, 2008: 138). Thrift (2008) advocates the use of performative methodologies, most famously advocating engagement with dance, arguing that performance has long engaged the pre-cognitive capacity of bodies to affect and be affected. Although by no means all led by engagement with non-

practice (1977, 1990a) – his prominent studies, such as *Distinction* (1984), were based on large-scale survey research, a quantitative method which some argue is out of synch with his practical ontology. Later, however, he announced himself free of his positivist shackles when he returned to an understanding of research as 'provoked and accompanied self analysis,' reinforcing the central role of reflexivity in research (Wacquant, 2004; Hamel, 1997; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 227).

representational theory, embodied knowledge is now a well-established concern of geographers and social scientists more broadly, and the challenge of broadening our methodological toolbox has been the focus of a fair few 'innovations' aimed at overcoming the difficulty of capturing such information. These include (sensory) video methodologies (Simpson, 2011; Lorimer, 2010; Pink, 2009); embodied auto-ethnography (Wacquant, 2004a), participant observation (Longhurst et al., 2008; Bain and Nash, 2006) and interviewing (Turner, 2000); mobile methodologies (Buscher et al., 2011; Fincham et al., 2010; Hein et al., 2008); performance-based methods including music (Morton, 2005) theatre (Kaptani and Yuval-Davis, 2008), and dance (McCormack, 2003); as well as the extension of interview prompts beyond the verbal to the visual (Mason and Davies, 2009; Murray, 2009) and musical (Anderson, 2004b).

It is in this context that the go-along, as a newly formulated set of research techniques, took a formalised shape in methodology literature. As I hope to show, the research sensibility offered by this literature talks to many of the problematics raised by Bourdieu's ontology and, as such, I am keen to use my experience of adopting the method to consider its contribution to the challenge of how we might empirically study practice. Literature on the go-along attends directly to two of the key themes explored in this thesis: embodiment and spatialities, predominantly engaged through discussions of place. It does not directly attend to film but a spatial understanding of embodiment is key to the understanding of representation generated in this thesis. Further, the third core thematic strand drawn out in go-along literature – that of mobility – offers a way of thinking through what Bruno (2002) and Friedberg (1993) term the 'virtual mobility' of film, to explore the

medium's sensual spatiality in situ. Doing so can also extend uses for the method beyond existing discussions.

1.3. The go-along as a hybrid of qualitative interviewing and in situ observation.

At the simplest level, despite his own reservations about observation, Bourdieu's emphasis on *lived* experience – and the corresponding ambiguity provided by practical time – implies a commitment to being present in the moment of practice. This suggestion is reinforced by the insights of research undertaken by Boyle (2010; 2009) and Srivinas (2010a, 2010b, 2002, 1998) at the cinema. While both describe their key method as 'participant research', this is a broad label and such a method can take many forms. It could, for example, constitute a period of observation. But this did not seem appropriate to me. I felt that in just observing unknown audiences at the cinema I would more easily fall foul of the tendency for researchers to project our own framework onto the practice of others (Bourdieu, 1990a: 34). While I hoped that interviews would reduce the risk of this colonising tendency, conducting them out of context offered the downfall of potentially producing an abstract, disembodied understanding of practice (Bourdieu, 1990a: 91). Keen to combine the benefits of both methods I turned to the go-along, a relatively new form of participant observation that attempts to do just that.

The go-along belongs to a growing number of 'mobile methods', developed as explicit, valued methodologies (Büscher and Urry, 2009; Pink, 2007a; Sheller and Urry, 2006; Kusenbach, 2003). There have been various such methods adopted in geography, including strapping head-mounted cameras onto participants (Brown et al, 2008), setting up cameras in participants' cars (Laurier, 2010) or observing

train travellers (Bissell, 2009; Watts, 2008). The majority of the literature, however, offers an account of the go-along. The term umbrellas both 'walk alongs', in which the researcher walks with participants, and which dominate the existing literature; and 'ride-alongs', in which they join them on a car or bike journey (Spinney, 2006; Kusenbach, 2003). What you do in a go-along is quite self-explanatory: you accompany, or 'go-along' with, a participant as they engage in the (mobile) practice in which you are interested. As you do so, you conduct a conversational interview while simultaneously observing – and responding to – participants' embodied behaviour.

The 'interview' element should be informal and seems to be most productive when it takes a more conversational form. According to Kusenbach (2003) and Pink (2007a, 2007b) this element should involve the participant(s) talking you through their thoughts about, and reasons for, actions, using 'spatial cues' to prompt comments. As with semi-structured interviews, the focus is on encouraging the participant to speak freely, prompting only where necessary. As you engage in conversation, however, you are not only paying close attention to what participants are saying but also what they are *doing*. By interviewing in situ, you are able to observe participants' bodily interaction with spaces as they talk, and use this observation to guide questions and/or interpret what the participant is saying.

My go-alongs involved attending the cinema with participants, *watching* what they (and I) did there (comprising the observation element), and asking them to talk to me about their experience, including of the film and anything else of interest during the trip (forming the interview element). While, clearly, an element of observation is involved in all interviews (and, for that matter, conversations) in the go-along we are not just observing the participant and their reaction or relationship to an

interview situation. Instead, we are able to observe their interaction with others and, as Kusenbach (2003) points out, are therefore more attentive to informal networks of social relationships than we might be in an interview where, Pink (2007a) argues, a participant is less likely to talk about such apparently meaningless, everyday, exchanges. This points to an opportunity to access the 'social cinema scenes' described by Puwar (2007) in a contemporary setting, as well as gaining in situ awareness of the relational nature of habitus.

Despite not engaging with Bourdieu's work, in her description of the go-along Kusenbach (2003) answers many of his concerns about research methods. She, too, points out that in observing we cannot pick up on or learn the 'layers and contexts of meaning that subjectively transform a mundane routine into something entirely different' (Kusenbach, 2003: 470), echoing his argument that such routines can be so implicit the researcher does not ask about them in an interview situation and the participant does not think to talk about them. Instead, Kusenbach argues, by conducting a go-along, observation is undertaken in a context where you can ask about anything of interest. Interviews, meanwhile, become prompted circumstantially and contextually and are therefore more likely to incorporate the elements of practice not usually drawn out in interviews because they 'go without saying'.

Furthermore, Kusenbach (2003: 469) argues, being able to engage with a participant's practice in situ 'de-emphasises the researchers' own perceptual presuppositions and biases', a key issue for Bourdieu. Additionally, Pink (2007a: 244) explains that by 'walking with' we become more aware of embodied experience, and the layered sensorial experience of everyday life: we smell the smells, taste the food, experience (dis)comfort and hear the sounds, all of which

are fundamental to practice but most of which are left out in a conventional interview context and many difficult to pick up on when observing. A final suggestion of the go-along's suitability to Bourdieu's framework and exploring my questions is that Kusenbach emphasises the method's effectiveness at picking up on the ways in which biographies, histories and memories influence the spatialities of experience — a consideration fundamental to Bourdieu's concept of habitus, which holds embodied histories as vital to practice (Kusenbach, 2003: 472-474).

As is beginning to become clear, literature on the go-along emphasises the method's ability to pay attention to the significance of corporeality in the social world. This raises one of three key themes in the literature: embodiment.

Kusenbach also argues that this hybrid method is particularly suited to an analysis of spatial practices as, by joining the participant in their everyday activities we are offered the opportunity for a more in-depth understanding of the personal experiences of space and the construction of place (2003: 466 – 472). And indeed place is another key theme across writing on the go-along. Unsurprisingly, the methodologically generative nature of mobility is also much discussed, and the connection between the three place-embodiment-mobility is key to arguments made about the validity of the method. As such, it seems important to explore them further to fully outline the potential of the method to speak to Bourdieu's concerns and my research questions. Although they are fundamentally co-implicated, in discussing place-embodiment-mobility one or other is often brought to the fore, with place perhaps the most frequently discussed.

1.3.1 The significance of place in literature on the go-along.

Engaged with as both a prompt in walking interviews (De Leon and Cohen, 2005; Jones et al, 2008a, 2008b; Anderson, 2004 Kusenbach, 2003; Carpiano, 2009; Moles, 2008; Hein et al, 2008; Hall, 2009; Hall et al, 2006) and as constituted through the research event (Murray, 2009; Ross et al, 2009; Moles, 2008; Pink, 2007a, 2007b, 2008a, 2008b; Lund 2006; Spinney, 2006; Anderson, 2004), place is a protagonist in all of the literature I could find on the go-along.

Pink uses discussions of walks with her participants through a community garden in Ludlow (2007a) and on a tour of Mold (2008a) to argue that by 'walking with video' researchers can adapt to participants' rhythms, embodiments, sensations and, as such, get closer to their imaginings of place. To Pink this means that the researcher can become attuned to a participant's conception of a place as it is phenomenologically *enacted* and is more able to recognise that 'the co-presence of researcher and research subject is itself inscribed on place-as-event as it is simultaneously experienced and constituted' (2008a: 179) – a claim that talks to the approach to space adopted in this thesis. Furthermore, drawing on Casey's (1996) philosophy of the co-ingredient nature of place, and De Certeau's (1984) analysis of walking through the city, Pink argues that walking with video enables the researcher to acknowledge ethnography itself as place-making practice (2008a: 176-77).

Similarly, anthropologists Lee and Ingold (2006) argue that walking with participants can be particularly useful in exploring how places are 'made' by our routes through them. Anderson (2004: 255), again drawing on Casey (1996), suggests that because walking with, or 'bimbling', enables us to be aware that

places 'are not only a medium but also an outcome of action, producing and being produced through practice', it is a useful tool for developing socio-spatial understandings. Ross et al (2009) echo this sentiment in arguing that, by walking with young people in care, they were able to reflect on the 'interrelatedness of self and place' (2009: 620). In this vein, go-alongs are seen to emphasise the ways in which personal narratives, or biographies, impact on the co-constitution of place and embodiment. Kusenbach (2003) identifies this as one of the key uses of the go-along – to explore the relationship between biography and 'perception of place' (2003: 474). Moles (2008) and Lund (2006) further emphasise that walking with encourages reflection on the role personal narratives and memories play in the constitution of place. The idea here is that as researchers and researched walk together, the built environment acts a prompt for these alternative, often pre-reflexive, embodied knowledges (cf. De Leon and Cohen, 2005; Anderson, 2004; Kusenbach, 2003).

As I hope is becoming clear, the understanding of place encouraged by this literature is inseparably related not just to mobility but to embodiment. This interrelation of body and place brings the methodology in line with arguments made in the geography of architecture (Jacobs and Merriman, 2011; Paterson, 2011; Saville, 2006; Lees, 2001). Indeed Rose et al. (2010) and Degen et al. (2010) productively engage the method for research in that framework. The go-along, then, provides the tools for studying the relationship between spatialities and practice. But while this clearly offers a way of thinking through the material spaces of viewing, Bruno's (2002) understanding of the film itself as a spatial entity suggests that the go-along can also offer an important methodological contribution to studies of cinema. In so doing, it suggests that the go-along is an appropriate

method through which to access the sensual geographies of cinema spaces and to explore my question ‘how are the spaces of cinema are constituted?’ – those on and off the screen.

The ability to capture the pre-reflexive and embodied elements of practice must also be addressed, though. Bourdieu himself emphasises the break academic study makes ‘with the imminent ends of collective action’ and argues that such a break ‘is presupposed in the very intention of talking about practice and especially of understanding it and seeking to make it understood other than by producing and reproducing it practically’ (1990a: 34). Indeed, the difficulty of reflecting the pre-reflexive and embodied nature of others’ practice is reflected in the tendency of studies emphasising embodied knowledge to engage auto-ethnographic methods rather than engage other participants (Hastie, 2007; Wacquant, 2004a; Sobchack, 2000; del Rio, 1996). The challenge is to extend this evocative engagement to include not just our own bodies but to attempt to think those of others and maintain some of the imminence of practice. The go-along is seen to overcome precisely this issue.

1.3.2 The body: rhythm, empathy and the senses in the go-along.

There are two connected ways in which embodiment is explicitly discussed in the literature. First, it is drawn out in Pink’s (2007a, 2008a) claims to an embodied empathy with participants, an effect of the method that she argues brings the researcher closer to their participants’ embodiment and place enactment. This is closely linked to a broader discussion about the distinct knowledges offered by tuning into a body-on-the-move, and the ways in which being on-the-move together can bring us closer to an understanding of others’ place-perception,

further entwining understandings of embodiment-place-mobility (Degen et al., 2008; Hall et al., 2006; Anderson, 2004; Kusenbach, 2003).

Claiming that walking with video produces 'empathetic and sensory embodied (emplaced) understandings of another's experience' (2007a: 250), Pink emphasises the bodily empathy that stems from shared kinaesthetic experiences. Throughout her research Pink mobilises her senses to access other people's imaginings of place (2007a: 240). Directly linking place-embodiment-mobility, she argues that it was by eating, drinking, photographing and journeying with her participants that she was able to focus in on similarities in sensations, and become attuned to the making of Mold as a 'Slow City' (2008a: 176 – 185).¹⁹ While we can never directly access imaginings of place, Pink argues, we can get closer to other people's embodied perceptions and, 'begin to make places that are similar to theirs, and thus feel we are similarly emplaced' (2008a: 193).

Situating her work in a research tradition of connecting walking with vision and place making (2007a: 244), Pink (2007a) argues that 'walking with can bring us closer to understanding how other people perceive their multisensory environments, constitute place through everyday practice and live in their bodies' (2007a: 246). Through this focus, the body becomes integrated into understandings of perception, and vision becomes a more complex process — an argument also made forcefully by Degen et al (2008) who conducted go-alongs as part of a mixed methodology exploring people's experiences of designed spaces, such as shopping centres (see also Lund, 2006). To indicate how intense this

¹⁹ Slow cities 'are characterised by a way of life that supports people to live slow. Traditions and traditional ways of doing things are valued. These cities stand up against the fast-lane, homogenised world so often seen in other cities throughout the world. Slow cities have less traffic, less noise, fewer crowds.' (Slowmovement.com/slowcities)

attunement can be, Pink describes a shift in her corporeal experience on parting with her tour guides in Mold: 'Once walking hurriedly to my car I felt more deeply how my way of both being in and knowing the town shifted as I was disengaged from my hosts' (2008a: 192). The idea that we have particular ways of being-in-the-world is familiar from phenomenology and here the aim is to use shared physical experiences to become attuned to other people's lived practice, including their practising of place, overcoming representational difficulties associated with pre-reflexive, embodied knowledges (Pink, 2007a: 240).

This links closely to the second way in which the body is engaged with in this literature. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the body with which researchers are attempting to become attuned is a body-on-the-move. As such, it isn't just about eating the same things, experiencing the same weather, being in the same place, but also about using the bodily rhythm of being-on-the-move to open up a different kind of embodied communication. Through Solnit (2001), Anderson (2004) claims that his 'aimless' wandering (bimbling) with participants mirrors the rhythm of thought so that the bodily movements-in-place give rise to a more relaxed, free-flowing conversation. This leads us closer to understanding participants' embodied place perception by eliciting embodied knowledges, pre-reflexively drawn on in the moment of practice (Moles, 2008: 4.8). Ross et al (2009: 612), who undertook research with children in care, similarly describe an 'opening up' of their participants once interviews were undertaken while walking, as the conversations began to flow freely with the movement of the body through place (see also Lorimer and Lund, 2003: 132).

This has much in common with those methodologies aimed at drawing forth pre-reflexive knowledges or embedded memories by engaging prompts such as

photographs (Mason and Davies, 2009; Harper, 2002); music (Anderson, 2004b); food (Brady, 2011) and (personal) objects (Wade, 2004; Hoskins, 1998). The difference here is that the body is engaged not just as responding to a prompt, but also functioning as a prompt in itself (De Leon and Cohen, 2005). Anderson directly combines the two and argues that 'by harnessing the practice of bimbling in this co-ingredient environment I was able to...use *both* the practice *and* the place to prompt the recall of activist knowledges' (2004: 257, my italics). With the emphasis on walking together, it is important to note that this engages not just the researcher's body or the participants', but both, pulling them into a motion that elicits particular kinds of conversations and shared knowing.

The sensuous, walking, riding, place-making, mobile researching body is a key feature of the majority of methodological literature discussing the go-along, and the ability of the method to access embodied knowledge is referenced throughout. By enabling me to observe bodily practices and think through pre-reflexive knowledge in situ it offered ways of thinking through my question 'how might differentiated bodies practice cinema-going differently?' and 'how might film representation be experienced in practice?' As this discussion suggests, mobility is fundamental to the methodological literature's engagement with the body and the irony of adopting a mobile method to study an ostensibly sedentary practice (at least the film-viewing component) was not lost on me. But doing so in fact served to engage literature on the virtual mobility of film (Bruno, 2002; Friedberg, 1993), and thus highlight an alternative form of mobility to which the method could usefully be applied.

1.3.3. The go-along, mobility, and extending it to the virtual mobility of film.

Mobility is, as the above discussions show, integrated into all discussions of place and embodiment in literature on the go-along. Much of this work claims that being mobile is empirically generative, that it enables researchers to access 'different' knowledges and different ways of being in the world from those offered by more 'conventional', 'sedentary' methods (Pink, 2007a; Moles, 2008; Kusenbach, 2003). Hall et al suggest that adopting a mobile methodology generates an 'animate geography' as 'living things do not stand still, they move' (2006: 2). Although not all of this work engages directly with the mobilities turn, it is nevertheless keen to emphasise 'the different engagement with spaces that being mobile produces' (Moles, 2008: 1.1).

Hein et al argue that although research subjects are always mobile, they are often studied in 'sedentary interviews and surveys. In contrast, mobile methodologies seek to use movement as part of the research approach itself.' (2008: 1268). Hall et al (2006) similarly suggest that the affinity between biography and place, 'movement as narrative – is neglected when the interview takes place only here, or there; but when conversation and movement combine, when the interview takes place on the way from here to there, all sorts of synergies – reverberations – are set in motion' (2006: 3). The overall sense generated by a review of the literature is that being mobile engenders a different embodied way of being-in-the-world that emphasises and embraces our different ways of engaging with space and place (cf. Moles, 2008: 1.1). Despite growing arguments elsewhere that 'mobility is an ontological absolute' (Adey, 2006: 76), in literature on the go-along what counts as being mobile seems to amount to a physical traversal through space.

With the emphasis on the advantage of a body-*on-the-move* for accessing embodied knowledge and embedded memories one could assume that I would not benefit from such elicitation for a large part of my research event — as we sit and watch a film in relative stillness. However, as Hein et al (2008) point out, while they are yet to be discussed at length in the literature, ‘it is easy to think of other forms of mobility that could be used to open up alternative ways of being and knowing’ (2008: 1279). In my research there was of course *actual* walking around the cinema – as we picked up tickets, bought or collected hot drinks, walked upstairs, found our seats and so on. But there was also another dimension of mobility on my go-alongs: the virtual mobility of the film, and the sense of going *elsewhere* it provides (Bruno, 2002; Friedberg, 1993). And, while they do not equate to walking or the traversal of physical space, these journeys too proved to be methodologically generative, a finding through which I hope to contribute to literature on the go-along and which I return to in my later chapters, particularly Chapter Seven.

This was, of course, in many ways a ‘foreshadowed problem’ (Malinowski, 1922: 8-9, in Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007) as I had already developed an interest in the mobility offered by film as a way of thinking through the embodied nature of spectatorship (Bruno, 2002; Cresswell and Dixon, 2002; Friedberg, 1993). As Chapter Two explained, Bruno (2002) understands spectatorship as a peripatetic engagement, and film as a medium homologous with technologies of travel and tourism. To Bruno (2002), meaning is made not just as we move through the film but also as it moves (through) us. In tracing the genesis of film and its exhibition culture to cultures of shopping and tourism, Friedberg (1993) similarly concludes that the film’s (female) spectator is a *flâneuse*, engaging film’s ‘mobile and virtual

gaze'. It is mobile, Friedberg (1993) argues, because of its extension of the architecture of tourism such as world fairs and panoramas and it is virtual because of its reliance on the virtual gaze of photography (1993: 37). But foreshadowed problem or not, throughout my go-alongs this virtual mobility seemed very much in place and I found it proved to be methodologically productive in similar ways to the 'real' journeys described in the literature.

By offering the opportunity to interview in situ, while observing the practice in which one is interested, the go-along talks to many of the drawbacks of social science research raised by Bourdieu (1990a; 1977). Specifically, literature on the go-along emphasises the method's ability to access pre-reflexive embodied knowledges, both by engaging the built environment as a prompt and by observing bodily movement in practice. Because of this, it seemed appropriate not just for exploring the question of how differentiated bodies might practise cinema-going differently. But also for considering the question 'how might we empirically study practice?' – especially because the literature also suggests that the method evokes a reflexive stance to research that helps overcome perceptual bias, another key concern for Bourdieu. Further, by claiming to offer access to the in-the-moment co-constitution of place through embodied mobility, it offered a way of considering how the spaces of cinema are constituted. And, finally, by situating the researcher in the moment of practice it seemed to offer a way in to my question — how is film representation experienced in practice?

At the moment, however, all of this is just in theory. Before making claims about the method's ability to address my questions and Bourdieu's concerns, it is important to explain my own research practice, including my addition of a preparatory informal interview – a technique suggested by Kusenbach (2003) and

undertaken by most of the studies referenced above. In the following section I explain the purpose of these interviews, outline the sites of my research, explain my recruitment process, data analysis, and offer reflexions on the go-along as practised.

2. Methodology in practice: the what, where, when and who of my research.

As explained in the introductory chapter, people aged over 45, predominantly the over-60s, represent the fastest growing cinema audience in the UK (Cox, 2012; UK Film Council, 2009; FAME, 2007; Macnab, 2007). Perhaps because of this, many cinemas now provide mid-week matinees for the over -50s or -60s, offering tickets at a reduced rate or free, often accompanied by a free tea or coffee. While these offer a very particular type of cinema-going that could be considered outside of the mainstream, I was interested in the audience being constituted at such events and decided to undertake my research at two such matinees. For this I adopted the go-along as my key method and supplemented it with informal interviews, intended to 'break the ice' before the main research event.

Despite high hopes, in undertaking the go-along I found that the merging of the two dominant qualitative methods in a best-of-both-worlds hybrid was not so seamless in practice. Like most qualitative methods, the go-along requires a relentless process of negotiation, renegotiation and adaptation as well as some thoroughly disheartening moments. I hope to show that it offered a productive research environment through which to consider my questions as it enabled me to work with particular bodies in specific spaces of viewing while watching films that participants at least claimed they would have been watching regardless of my research. To explain this further, in this section I outline my final methodology and

describe the data collection period – what I did in practice, where, and who with. I move on to data analysis and – using all of this – end with a reflexion on my research practice, in particular my engagement with the go-along.

2.1 What I did. Part one: go-alongs at the cinema.

Between July 2009 and November 2010 I carried out 30 go-alongs at two sites: the Rio Cinema in Dalston, East London and the Clapham Picturehouse in South London. Across the course of this research I watched 29 different films with participants, conducting on-the-spot film analyses and observations as we did so (for details of what I watched, where and with whom, see Appendix One). On these trips I met the women at the cinema, at a time determined by them, and we parted after our post-film conversation. I purposefully got to the cinema 10 minutes before the arranged time so that I could observe the moment the women arrived, and pay attention to any ‘informal sociability’ that might greet them (Kusenbach, 2003). On arrival, I allowed the participant to lead our route around the cinema and determine what we did, all the time paying attention to what my participant was doing and how we both moved. Before the film we tended to chat freely, and I offered no structured questions. I audio-recorded our conversations and attempted to commit to memory my observations to note down at a later stage.

Once inside the auditorium I would hang back so that the women went to their preferred seat, and I observed the way they negotiated the layout of the auditorium, as well as the other bodies encountered. In doing all of this, I was watching interactions between practising bodies and spaces of the cinema, as well as tuning into my own sensations, drawing on the method to explore the practical relationship between body and space. Once the cinema lights dimmed, I jotted

down the observations thus far and continued to observe the behaviour of the woman I was at the cinema with, as well as my own. As the film started, I attempted to tune into my own sensations and thoughts and continued to do so as I watched, as well as observe any notable changes in the woman's comportment and note down anything she or the wider audience said. In this way, I generated a form of on-the-spot film analysis. I continued to jot down observations of my responses and those of participants once the film finished, until we either got up to leave or the lights came on.

After the film, I asked participants what they thought of it, using my own responses to form questions, and participants often did the same. These conversations took place in a variety of locations: at the Rio we often stayed in the auditorium or moved to the small café area in the foyer. At the Clapham Picturehouse they almost always took place in the cinema's café/bar, apart from one for which we went to the café across the road. These conversations ended when the participant wished them to, taking anywhere from ten minutes to four hours. This mirrored the type of post-film conversation that I would have when attending outside of a research context, and in relation to my on-going observations it enabled me to interrogate the differences and similarities not just between our observable practices but also some of the pre-reflexive processes that occur as the film becomes cinema. These conversations could do this, I suggest, because the traces of the often pre-reflexive biographical details and memories that had been brought forward throughout viewing – through the journey provided by film's virtual mobility – were still tangible.

It is perhaps important to note that three of the go-alongs were in groups of two, with one woman joining only for the trip to the cinema. Of those listed in Appendix

One, three participants – Diane, Sheila and Mavis – were not interviewed, other than on our trip to the cinema. This did not seem to impact upon our ‘field relations’, as the familiarity between the two women appeared to override the distance felt when meeting someone for the first time. There was however one significant difference between group and individual go-alongs. While the interview component of all go-alongs was conversational, I would make a conscious effort to not interrupt a participant while they were talking. With two participants such a consideration became ineffective as they consistently interrupted each other. This did not render the go-alongs void, however, as while it certainly blocked certain information, the two participants also served to draw out different knowledges, not just in conversation but also through *what they did* at the cinema — both of which further encouraged me to reflect on my own practice.

I hope that the discussion in the previous section serves as justification for my adoption of the go-along as the principal method for this research. By going to the cinema I was able to observe and partake in the practice of cinema-going as it happened and, as such, pay attention to the temporalities of practice so important to Bourdieu’s framework. In situ research enabled me across time to note differences between the women as well as the similarities in their practice, enabling an attempt (at least) at accessing the embodied history of the habitus described by Bourdieu. Because I, too, was engaging in cinema-going I also tuned into my own practices and embodiment, drawing on my own sensations to think through theirs, an in-the-moment comparative approach that enabled me to access some of my own taken-for-granted ways of practising cinema, and corresponding practical logic.

The public nature of the events meant that I could observe the ways in which the women I attended with interacted with fellow audience members and I was careful to watch for both verbal and bodily communication. If we understand cinema as a field then I was able, through the go-along, to witness the game being played and, through our conversations attempt to get a sense of the embodied capitals at play (Bourdieu, 1990a, 1984, 1977). By experiencing the atmosphere at each event and the significance of the wider audience to our relational positioning, I was able to explore how differentiated bodies might practise cinema differently – a key question for this thesis. Being at the cinema together also enabled me, like Sobchack (2004, 2000), to draw on my own bodily sensations and think through their relationship to the meaning made in the moment of viewing. But my position next to participants meant that I could also observe any of their own visible (if subtle) physical response to the film. In doing so I was able to capitalise on the methodological sensibility of the go-along to think through not just my own embodied co-constitution of film, but also that of the woman beside me. As such it offered a way of engaging Voss's (2011) notion of the 'surrogate body' through habitus to consider the question 'how might representation be experienced in practice?', while avoiding the universalising transference of my particular relationship to film onto participants (Morley, 2009; Gillespie, 1995; Bourdieu, 1977).

Finally, as the literature suggests, by moving around the building with participants I was able to think through how this cinema space was co-constituted by differently practising bodies including my own — an insight that encouraged my engagement with literature from the geography of architecture (Jacobs and Merriman, 2011; Jacobs et al., 2006; Saville, 2006; Lees, 2001). In this way, the method allowed an

in situ engagement with the practical constitution of space and offered a way of exploring the question 'how are the spaces of cinema constituted?' Through our simultaneous viewing of the film and the conversations it generated I was further able to attempt to access the sensual geographies of film, and explore how our 'surrogate body' and the habitus it implies are fundamental to the constitution of film's space (Voss, 2011). An unexpected value of the go-along was that it further enabled me to witness the ways in which these two spatialities of cinema are co-constituted through the body, in the moment of practice.

As such, I benefited from many of the values claimed on behalf of the go-along in the literature. I did not find the process seamless, though, and reflect on my research experience in the final section of this chapter. Before doing so, I would like to outline my methodology in full. While verbal data is not generally considered sufficiently able to represent practice (Jacobs and Merriman, 2011; Thrift, 2008), most go-alongs were supplemented by introductory conversational interviews. Despite the oft-cited drawbacks, I unexpectedly found these interviews boosted the go-along's ability to access pre-reflexive embodied knowledges. And it is this process that I discuss next.

2. 2. What I did. Part two: informal interviews.

With all of my emphasis on pre-reflexive and embodied understandings, it might seem inappropriate to include qualitative interviewing as part of this methodology. My decision to do so, however, is in line with the majority of research referenced above (Degen et al, 2008; Ross et al., 2009; Moles, 2008; Pink, 2008a, 2008b, 2007a, 2007b; Hall et al., 2006). In my case it was for two reasons: I wanted to ensure that our encounter at the cinema was not the first time we had met, so that

there was a level of familiarity between us on that trip; and I wanted to generate an understanding of participants' biographical trajectory. The latter was an attempt to discover at least some elements of the history participants embodied, and which fed into their practical logic. I intended these conversations to be very casual encounters but I developed a prompt sheet and, while this was not always used, it does serve to represent the themes of our conversations (see Appendix Two).

While the 'natural' go-along is intended as a way to access a certain level of naturally occurring practice, in adopting the method for my MRes research I found that the 'unnatural' pairing of me with my participant on their trip to the cinema was disruptive to this. It has been shown that embodied emotions have an impact on the research encounter, and my experience indicated that I might find the go-along more successful if a connection had already been established with participants (Ezzy, 2010; Inkle 2010; Kim, 2006; Davidson and Bondi, 2004; Longhurst et al., 2008; Anderson and Smith, 2001). I do not mean to suggest that I aspired to a deep emotional attachment, nor that meeting participants once before the go-along miraculously offered access to a 'natural' practice. I merely suggest that it enabled the instigation of an emotional dynamic prior to our trip to the cinema, so that the encounter there was not dominated by a 'weighing up' on both our parts. My hope was that the interviews would enable a more relaxed conversation at the cinema, offering better access to the taken for granted elements of habitus that sit behind the reflexive engagement offered by much research (Bourdieu, 1990a: 91).

Part of the appeal of the go-along is the claimed ability of the method to be able to access the pre-reflexive relationship between biography and place. Embodied history is so fundamental to Bourdieu's understanding of practical sense, however, that I wanted to first generate an understanding of participants' biographical

trajectory beyond those fragments drawn out by engagement with particular material spaces. As suggested, although reflexive, the biographical details and memories offered in these interviews provided me with a way to contextualise the women's practice at the cinema, not just within personal histories but also within broader histories of institutions and social change. My hope was that this enabled an informed engagement with embodiments at the cinema, and their subjective expression of objective structures.

The interviews varied in time and location. The shortest lasted just half an hour; the longest went on for over five. Most took place in the women's homes (12) or in the café/bar at the Clapham Picturehouse (11). Three were held in a café across the road from the Clapham Picturehouse, a couple at cafés near the Rio, one in a café near the participant's home, and one in my kitchen. Despite the relatively standardised (although fluid) framework for the conversation, then, there was some diversity in the nature of the interview. When conducting interviews in the women's homes, for example, they would often engage props to talk through biographical details, including family photographs and DVD collections, generating quite different data to interviews conducted in a café. I produced 'head notes' after the interviews to maintain the tacit knowledge gained beyond the talk recorded and these, too, fed in to my understanding of the data (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 147). In writing the empirical chapters I was surprised to find myself drawing on this data quite extensively. This does not need to suggest a reversion to purely discursive, disembodied analysis. Instead, these quotes only became significant in light of my observations at the cinema, and the two worked together to produce my analysis of cinema as a spatial and embodied practice.

In the context of the go-along these pre-interviews provide a potentially productive way of assessing the method's ability to access the taken for granted embodied knowledge of practice, by thinking through the different histories divulged in the different scenarios. In this sense, in addition to assisting in a consideration of the question 'how might differentiated bodies practise the cinema differently?', it also offers a way in to the question 'how might we study practice empirically?'. As I discuss in Chapter Six, the films we watched together did draw out biographical details previously undisclosed, as well as memories of films seen.

2.3 Where I did it: matinees for the over-60s at the Rio Cinema and Clapham Picturehouse.

As explained, my research took place at two cinemas that held matinees for the over-60s: the Rio Cinema in Dalston, East London and the Clapham Picturehouse in South London. During the period of research there were a number of similar matinees held across the UK. The Picturehouse Cinema group has 19 cinemas nationwide, with five in London, all of which host Silver Screen matinees. In addition to the programme run by Picturehouse Cinemas, just under half of the venues in the Odeon cinema chain offer Senior Screens for the over-50s, with seven of their 25 London cinemas offering the service. In addition, like the Rio, a large number of independent cinemas host such events across the country. As such, the events held at the two research sites are representative of a wider pattern of exhibition across the UK. My reason for choosing these two sites was practical — they were the first two to allow me to conduct research. Despite this, they ended up shaping my findings by offering distinct 'social cinema scenes' (Puwar, 2007).

The Rio Cinema Classic Matinee takes place on the first or second Wednesday of the month. The matinee has external funding and is offered to the over-60s free, on production of a 'freedom pass'.²⁰ One free cup of tea or coffee and a slice of cake are available from the café on production of a ticket. The audience is made up of those attending with care homes or community groups and those attending independently. The films screened are programmed specifically for the matinee, and there is a 20 minute interval about two thirds of the way through. The programme is a mixture of 'classic' films – generally those recently re-mastered and re-released – and more contemporary titles, often a month or two after showing in the mainstream programme (see Appendix One). The cinema has one screen, so the matinee audience is the only audience found in the cinema for the duration of the event. The maximum audience is 360. It usually fills to capacity and rarely falls below half of that.

In contrast, the Clapham Picturehouse Silver Screen is a twice-weekly event. On Tuesdays and Thursdays before 5pm tickets for the over-60s are offered at the reduced price of £4 (this is half the price of the standard concessionary rate of £8), and free tea and biscuits are provided. The audience is made up of those attending individually or as part of a social group; there are no community groups or care homes at these screenings. The cinema has four screens, and offers a choice of five films on any given day, all of which are also showing as part of the mainstream programme. More often than not these are contemporary releases. All screenings are also open to people under-60 at the standard ticket price. On Thursdays, the cinema hosts its 'Big Scream' cinema club for parents and babies up to 12-months-old. While they often dominate, then, the Silver Screen audience

²⁰ The Freedom Pass is the free travel pass for public transport available to people over-60 and disabled people living in London.

is not the only one found at the cinema. There is the potential to seat 472, but the Silver Screen audience rarely rises above 50, and there tend to be no more than 30 people in any one screening.

Across both, the majority of the audience is female, reflecting UK-wide statistics that show a female skew in cinema attendance (UK Film Council, 2009: 118).

While similar in sentiment, the matinees offered by the two research sites vary considerably. The different temporalities of the two types of matinee, and the distribution of the audience between one or four screens, generate quite distinct 'social cinema scenes' (Puwar, 2007). A sense of these can, I think, be garnered from the different ways in which the two are advertised:

'The Rio's monthly Classic Matinees take place on the first or second Wednesday of the month. There is an interval for every film, and extra seating is provided in the foyer. We are delighted that thanks to funding from the Big Lottery's Reaching Communities Programme we are able to offer free admission for the Over 60's! Please come along and enjoy a film and a chat!'

The Rio also produces a flyer for each film that is distributed widely in the local area, and handed out at the end of the preceding matinee.

The Clapham Picture house meanwhile offers this description:

'On Tuesday and Thursday afternoons (before 5.00) anyone over 60 can see any film for just £4, and receive complementary tea, coffee and biscuits in the relaxed atmosphere of our café-bar.'

Importantly, while different in tone, these blurbs both emphasise the sociability offered by the event: the Rio literally offering an invitation to a 'chat', and the Clapham Picturehouse suggesting the 'relaxed' conviviality of a café.

In their comprehensive study of film consumption in Nottingham, Jancovich et al (2003) highlight the need to understand 'that the meanings of different modes of film consumption are tied to their location within the cultural geography of the city' (2003: 31). This concurs with Hubbard's (2002) argument that the distinctions between cinemas and audiences are mapped onto the landscape to produce cultural distinctions between places (2002: 1243). He argues that this implicit labelling in turn helps us to determine whether or not they are for people 'like us', thus reinforcing such associations and maintaining a pre-reflexive distinction of cinemas along cultural lines (2002: 1257; 2003a: 267). Both the Rio and Clapham Picturehouse are independent cinemas. The Rio is a non-profit registered charity while the Clapham Picturehouse is part of the independent Picturehouse/City Screen chain. While not unique, these cinemas offer an experience different to that found at the multiplex, and both seem keen to offer an alternative to the clinical environments of the contemporary cinema-going experience.

The distinctiveness of the Rio is very much shaped by its history. Its art deco design (see figs. 1 and 2) is maintained from a 1937 refurbishment and unlike many of the older cinemas that are still running, it retains a single screen. As such, the shape of the Rio reflects the independent, non-commercial, nature of the cinema and connotes a particular – classed – type of cinema-going. While there are no period features of the original 1909 building clearly evident at the Clapham Picturehouse, its stripped floorboards and chalkboard signs similarly connote its status as an independently run venue, while also clearly marking it as part of the

'quality' Picturehouse/City Screen chain (see figs. 3 and 4). While their independent status means that both cinemas offer films other than major Hollywood releases, rarely these days would they draw from art house cinema. Rather, they tend to programme the more popular end of foreign-language and British films as well as American 'independent' cinema. Such programming would tend to connote audiences with relatively high levels of cultural capital, a classed connotation mirrored by the interiors (Bourdieu, 1984).



Figure.1. The exterior of the Rio Cinema, Dalston

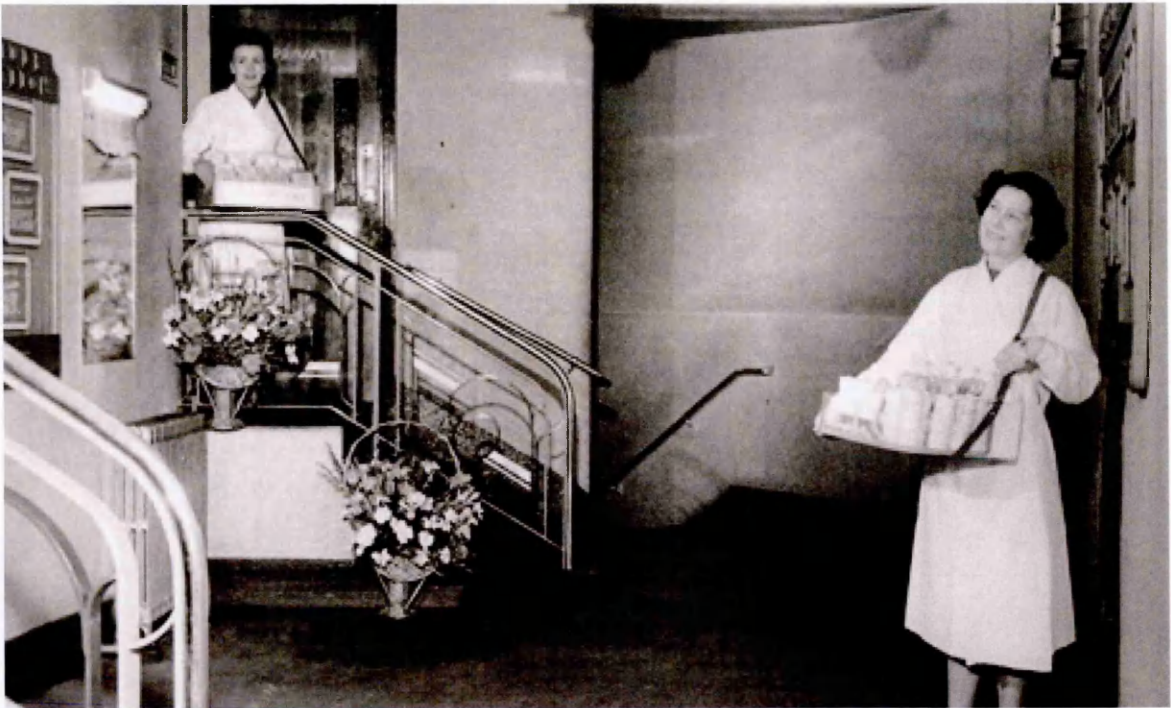


Figure 2. Usherettes upstairs at the Rio, approx. 1940s. Image courtesy of Rio Cinema



Figure 3. The exterior of the Clapham Picturehouse



Figure. 4. The handwritten signs of the Clapham Picturehouse

Despite the cinemas being of similar type (ie. independent), the audiences were demographically diverse, complicating arguments from Hubbard (2003a, 2003b, 2002) and Jancovich et al. (2003) and I found the ‘riskless risk’ Hubbard describes being, in part, constituted in the moment of practice. This is discussed further in the following chapter, here it seems important to explain why I chose to limit my sample to women.

2.5. Who with. Part one: why I chose to only recruit women.

There are two key and connected reasons for me choosing to limit my sample to women that attend matinees for the over-60s. First, there is a strong tradition of feminist film studies and I was keen to engage this through an alternative lens – that of practice theory. My second reason links to this: an element of female spectatorship that is overlooked by much of this work is the ‘double bind’ of ageing experienced by women, a double bind that is considered in cultural gerontology to

be exacerbated by film representations (Woodward, 1999). Working with such a group for this project is a modest attempt to disrupt the marginalisation of older women being mirrored in academic work by collaborating with them outside of gerontology.

Since the early 1970s cinema has provided a critical tool, a 'crucial terrain', for feminist thinking about the relationship between culture, representation and identity (Mulvey, 1989: 77, in Thornham, 1999). In the mid-1970s feminist theorists began to engage with ideas from psychoanalytical and semiotic frameworks being put to use more widely in film studies – an engagement epitomised by Laura Mulvey's (1975) seminal essay *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* – to consider issues of pleasure and identification for the female spectator. In very broad terms, this work argued that the dominant (and naturalised) 'male gaze' of film meant that women were present on screen only as fetishised object of desire, as objects of the gaze (Thornham, 1999: 2, 54). Thus, in order to 'get the joke' or otherwise identify with and gain pleasure from film, it was argued that female spectators undertook a form of masquerade in which they became complicit in their own oppression (Doane, 1982: 87; although see Modleski [1988: 25-29] for a critique that attempts to reclaim pleasure for the female spectator without her having to enter into such masochism).

While the feminist thrust of this psycho-semiotic framework is well attended to, feminists have offered other interventions in film studies. Drawing on the psychoanalytical insights of feminist film studies and combining them with social analyses offered by audience studies, Kuhn's (1984) early work on female spectatorship of 'women's genres' was pioneering in its call for recognition of social context as well as text in framing the female spectator, to explore the

struggles over meaning that occurred when women watched. This began the slow push back against what was widely argued to be a characterisation of the female spectator as passive, a push back that still continues today and was the starting point for Bruno's (2002) introduction of the *voyageuse*, Staiger's (2000) engagement with broader contexts of film reception, and Kuhn's (2002) own later work with audiences. Early notions of a simplistic binary between male/female gaze have also been problematised by work on black female spectatorship that exposes an assumed whiteness in this formulation and proposes the notion of an oppositional or critical gaze offered by those excluded from the equation (hooks, 1992; Gaines, 1988).

Despite its diversity, all of this work is concerned by the 'problem' of female spectatorship — the enjoyment by women of those images understood to contribute to the naturalisation of their marginalisation. While the formative work does not feature heavily in this thesis, it is to this heritage that it speaks. It was through engagement with these arguments that I wanted to work with female audiences, and contribute another piece of the mosaic to this cultural-political project. This links to my interest in studying older women particularly, as the 'double marginality' of ageing experienced by women as they reach late mid-life — noted in the same year by Sontag (1972) and de Beauvoir (1972) — has not been much considered by feminists working in film studies (Woodward, 1999, Beugnet, 2006, is a rare exception). Surprisingly, this is true even of those that engage older women for their histories of earlier periods of cinema (Stubbings, 2003; Kuhn, 2002; Stacey, 1994).

As Woodward (1999) observes, outside of gerontology the invisibility of older women in contemporary society is echoed by feminist scholarship. Along with

cultural gerontologists, Woodward asserts that ageing is a cultural process — one that is experienced more by women than men. It is this cultural process that she thinks feminism, in its implicit abjection of older women, helps to maintain as ‘ageism is entrenched within feminism itself’ (Woodward, 1999: xi). As such, it is the aim of her project to make the invisible visible, and interrupt this marginalisation. By bringing older women into a study of cinema that did not just focus on their memories of youth, but interrogated their practices in the present, I was keen in my work to contribute to this project. It seemed particularly appropriate for a study of cinema audiences to offer such a contribution because the majority of the older audience is female (UK Film Council, 2009).

The umbrella categories of ‘over-60’ and ‘women’ of course offer a great diversity of other social identities and positions and my participants represented a range of socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds. During my research, the importance of these other categories — specifically, in this case, those of ethnicity and class — became clear. Much like hooks’ (1992) disruption of ideas that cinema’s gaze could be understood through a male/female binary, the ‘double marginality’ experienced by older women is complicated when accompanied by a consideration of other social identities and positionings. As Thornham (1999: 1) explains, ‘[t]he assumption that the feminist theorist/critic speaks on behalf of all women can no longer be made...as ‘sisterhood’ reveals itself to be fractured by power differences along lines of class, race and sexual orientation’.

I must confess that I had not factored in the impact of such multiplicities before setting out on my research. This streamlining of participants to the identity (or two) by which you are interested is common in work on audiences. As Staiger (2005: 143) points out in her review of work on ‘minorities and the media’, a truly

'intersectional' understanding of these social relations within the context of media consumption has not sufficiently been carried out. I cannot claim to offer one fully here, as the terms on which a study is undertaken can't help but inflect the data gathered and, in retrospect, I don't feel I focussed adequately during fieldwork on the difference – or not – that such layered identities (and the multi-dimensional habitus they suggest) made to cinema as practice. One element deserving of particular note in this context is that I do not fully interrogate social class as an axis of identity and habitus for participants, and nor do I offer an in-depth analysis of its influence on cinema as practice. I dwell on this here because social class is probably the dimension of identity most associated with Bourdieu's (1984) work, and many who engage his theories do so to offer detailed class analyses of the phenomena under study – particularly cultural consumption (cf. Warde, 2008; Lizardo, 2006; Holt, 1998; Morley, 1992). That this thesis lacks such a focus is largely a methodological issue.

While I do not think that class can be understood as a solely self-defined identity, I failed to incorporate questions relating to it in my research design and this absence left me feeling uneasy about making any claims about the relationship between this dimension of identity and cinema going as practice for participants. Its absence is accounted for by my methodology. Had I strategically incorporated an interest in this dimension of social identity to my research design, I would have developed a research design through which I could offer such an analysis, which would have included an attempt to recruit interviewees whose experiences could speak to class matters in a systematic way. As it stands, and as the following section outlines, my recruitment process left no room for such sampling procedures and I did not recruit a sample that was representative on any class

terms (Blaxter et al., 2006). Moreover, as I did the interviews, the clearly shifting nature of this identity became clear as I listened to complex accounts of the changing material economic circumstances across the women's lives. As such, while the previous section offered a brief outline of the class associations of the two research sites and the next chapter incorporates a discussion of class differences among participants, I am not able to offer an in-depth class-based analysis of the kind commonly associated with Bourdieu (1984) and, indeed, classic audience studies (Hall, 1980; Morley, 1980). I hope, however, that the understanding of social difference and identity that arose in my research – which suggests it is emergent and co-constituted in the moment – serves to capture the way the multiplicity inherent to social identity, including that of class, plays out in cinema as practice.

Looking back at the end of this project, I can see similarly that my interest in older women did not need to limit me to engaging only with them. I could have explored my questions through a mixed gender sample of cinemagoers and a comparative analysis. Right or wrong, the decision to focus on women both limited and simplified the process of recruitment, and enabled me to engage with a variety of other social categories. Notwithstanding the gender bias, the women that I attended each cinema with offered a broadly representative sample of the audience populations from which they were recruited. This was despite a somewhat ad hoc and difficult recruitment process, which, as we shall see, did not leave me the privilege of carefully selecting those women that I attended the cinema with, and certainly left no room for formal sampling procedures.

2.6. Who with. Part two: accessing cinemas and recruiting participants.

As suggested above, I gained access to the research sites relatively easily. I had previously conducted research at the Rio for my MRes research, and had developed a good relationship with the Audience Development Officer, Jemma, who organised the Classic Matinees there. As such, negotiating permission to carry out a longer period of research only took a phone call. Gaining access to the Clapham Picturehouse was similarly smooth. Years ago I had worked on a film festival that hosted some screenings at the cinema so, to request access, I fished out the email address of my contact there, the manager Mike. He quickly agreed to me conducting the research. Once I had permission, I set about recruiting participants at each cinema. I could just as easily, perhaps more easily, have recruited participants through local community groups for older people or day centres for people over-60 and then accompanied those women to the cinema of their choice. But I wanted to ensure that I was finding people who were carrying out the practice that I was interested in, and recruiting at the cinema seemed the best way to do this.

My main method of getting people involved was to hand out flyers and approach women at the cinemas. As the description of the events above might suggest, it was quite a different process at the two sites. My hope that I might see some friendly faces from my previous research at the Rio were initially dashed when Jemma explained that the most regular attendee had not been in for over eight months. I did eventually bump into all three of the other participants but only once I was some months into my research. As such, I was 'on my own' at both cinemas and although the staff were very keen to help by pointing out friendly regulars, my recruitment sessions coincided with their busiest period so most of the time they

were far too busy. At the Rio I approached audience members once they were seated, either before the film or – if they didn't look too busy – during the interval. At the Clapham Picturehouse I approached potential participants in the Café bar, catching them before or after the film.

Because of the frequency of the events at the Picturehouse I felt I could manage to successfully recruit and undertake research with 15 women within the 12 months officially allotted to 'fieldwork'. The Rio, however, posed more problems – with only one screening a month and none in August, time was very tight as I was hoping to recruit 15 women *and* attend a matinee with each of them. I had scheduled 17 months as a result (ie. two matinees for recruitment and 15 for go-alongs), but this required a very successful initial recruitment. When I didn't get the numbers I needed I changed my tactic, handing out flyers as the women entered the cinema and collecting them back from those who were interested as they left. I handed out just under 230 flyers and 27 were returned to me. Over half of these (15) had to be discarded because the contact information had not been filled in. Although on these occasions I handed out flyers to all of the women attending the matinee, it is important to note that all apart from one chose to sit upstairs during our trip to the cinema. As such, they represented the more able-bodied proportion of the audience.

I followed up with those women who provided their contact details either by phone or by post – depending on their preference – and suffered a drop off of four, three who didn't respond to my letters and one woman who was very keen but ended up getting too busy with her own studies to be able to help with mine. The involvement of the last woman was a victim of an issue with conducting research of this type at a monthly event: someone who signs up in September would not

expect me to then arrange our go-along for the following March or even later in the year. I was concerned about timings and decided to make up some of the numbers by conducting more go-alongs at the Clapham Picturehouse.

Despite fewer audience members to choose from, recruitment at the Picturehouse had been a little easier than at the Rio. Here I also benefited from my consistent attendance as, in a few cases, it led regulars who had initially declined my invitation to take part in the research to change their mind. This was the case with four participants - Mrs Haider, Barbara, Shelagh and Dr Anlaw. I think their initial declination was because they treasured their cinema trips (hence the weekly attendance) and were therefore reluctant to share them with me. But their regular attendance also ensured that they saw me every week, and a casual sociability developed which began with a nod or smile before developing into short conversations about my progress. Eventually, after they saw me on go-alongs and understood the casual nature of the encounter, they offered to take part. At the other end of the spectrum, I recruited two people when they responded to a flyer they'd picked up at the box office. This meant I met the participants for the first time in our interview, generating a slightly different research event to those conducted with the regulars.

Although the recruitment process was not always without struggle, I did recruit samples that were representative of the audience populations as a whole, although as discussed, at the Rio, this sampling was from a smaller pool of the audience than it could have been. In the end I worked with 33 women in total, aged between 60 and 89 (see Appendix One). I managed to recruit 13 at the Rio and 17 at the Picturehouse, with three other women joining in on trips to the cinema, one at the Rio and two at the Picturehouse. In undertaking go-alongs with

these women, I found that the method enabled me to access elements of the embodied, pre-reflexive nature of practice, offering a productive, lived, way of thinking through my research questions. Maintaining such a sensuous, alive, understanding during the process of data analysis is however notoriously difficult (Latham, 2010; Pink, 2007a). Since it is suggested that videoing research offers a way of avoiding the flattening of data during analysis, and this is so important to my research, it seems important to outline why I chose not to engage such a method for recording my data before moving on to explain how I analysed it.

2.7. A note on audio and video recording in data collection.

While Kusenbach says that audio-recording is productive during go-alongs; to Pink (2007a), video-recording the research event is fundamental. Pink (2008a, 2008b, 2007a) argues that it not only makes the researcher more attuned to the movements of those they film, it also offers a rich data set that provokes a more embodied memory of the event itself (2008b: 2). As such, the videoing in Pink's research is not just a recording device — it is key to the value of the method's benefits (2007a: 250). With this in mind it seems important to explain why I audio recorded my go-alongs as although Pink is, as far as I can find, the only author that emphasises videoing as a key component of the go-along,²¹ she is certainly not alone in arguing that videoing research provides heretofore unavailable access to bodily communication during data analysis (Laurier, 2010; Lorimer, 2010; Jacobs et al, 2008; Dant, 2004).

²¹ Although Murray (2009) does conduct a once-removed form of 'walking with video' by giving her young participants videos with which to film their walk to school, which she then explores with them.

Notwithstanding the logistical problems of conducting a video ethnography of cinema-going – the (il)legality of filming during the film and the limited visibility in the darkened auditorium – I was reluctant to add such a dimension to my research. Ironical though it may be for a method of recording that is understood to capture the embodied elements of practice (Lorimer, 2010), videoing seems to lead to an attenuation of the researchers own bodily sensations in the moment of practice (Simpson, 2011). In the case of the go-along, it results in the researcher drawing on their body most significantly *after* the research event (Pink, 2008b: 2). This is, of course, not a problem in itself, but I was keen to think through the relational nature of embodiment in practice and engage my body as a tool in research to reflect on my own practice as well as that of participants (Longhurst, et al., 2008; Bain and Nash, 2006; Wacquant, 2004a). Simpson (2011) argues that if researchers make such engagement a key feature of video research practice then it is possible to do this. However, my lack of filming experience – an issue surprisingly absent from the literature – meant that for me the camera presented a distancing mechanism.

I am not, of course, claiming that my research was more, or less, authentic as a result of not videoing it. Instead, it meant – for me – that I was more capable of reflecting not just on my research practice (as Pink persuasively advocates we do), but also *my cinema practice* in the moment. I found writing notes on my own embodied sensations and observations of the participants' dispositions, comportments and movements in situ, alongside audio recording conversations offered the best way of recording data for my research aims. While video data is useful during analysis, my notes offered what I found to be a similarly fruitful, if different, access to the embodied nature of practice. As such, despite limitations in

representation that all researchers confront – including those engaging video data (Thrift, 2008: 139; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 148) – the talk and observations quoted in the following three chapters has been interpreted *through the body*. It is my hope that they evoke knowledge that moves beyond the text, escaping the often scornful way in which ‘talk’ is considered by those attempting to access embodied knowledges (Latham, 2010: 1999).

Not generating video data does not mean that my research fails to benefit from many of the properties claimed on behalf of the go-along by Pink (2008a, 2008b, 2007a, 2007b) and outlined above. Indeed, as the review above shows, the majority of the literature describes similar benefits from research conducted without picking up a camera (Carpiano, 2009; Anderson, 2004; Kusenbach, 2003). However, as discussed in the final section of this chapter, my experience of the go-along in practice differed to that described by the literature, suggesting that the method of data collection does encourage a different engagement with embodied knowledges and the senses, but not that either is more or less methodologically generative. Before moving on to this discussion, to explore the ways in which I attempted to maintain the embodied dimension of my data, I first describe my data analysis process.

2.4. Analysing the data: transcription, coding and trying to put the body back in.

Data analysis for me began while still in the ‘field’, as I began to transcribe those go-alongs I had undertaken, and type up observations. For any researcher interested in embodied practice, transcribing is a disheartening process. Typing up my recordings I had a distinct feeling that the lived understandings generated at

the cinema were disappearing with every keystroke. While this may seem like a reason to have adopted a video dimension to my research, visual data does not solve this problem. Indeed, Jacobs et al. (2008: 175), who videoed their research on Red Road Estate; and Dant (2004: 56) who videoed working practices at a garage, bemoan a similar deadening when presenting moving image data in a research journal and transcribing it respectively. This is also not a sensation that is unique to those working on embodied practice, and the politics of transcription has been discussed in a range of disciplines (cf. Bird, 2005; Tilley, 2003; Bucholtz, 2000).

My experience of transcribing offered a significant problem: its disembodiment nature meant I was unable to produce transcripts that supported my philosophical influences and the intentions of my project. As such, I developed a form of transcribing that included notes from the memories conjured up as I typed, embodied memories brought to the fore by listening to my tapes and hearing more than just talk. Sometimes this was as simple as noting that Joan had brought her own sugar to the café because of her on-going stomach problems. At other times, it was a memory of something I felt, or something subtle that one of the women I was with did. For example, the way that Ann fiddled with her wedding ring every time her speech drifted off, or the dramatic gesticulating of Joyce that was a fundamental part of her communicating but which was lost in a straight transcript of talk.

Although my added stage directions do not, of course, solve the problem of disembodied transcriptions, I found that during the analysis process they gave me pointers and sparked memories that helped me realise that certain spoken themes also shared particular bodily acts and embodied sensations. The process of

adding these stage directions in my transcriptions almost happened without me thinking as, while I listened and typed, the memories flooded forward. In this way I found transcribing a fundamental part of analysing my data, acting as it did like the prompts engaged in research (see also Bird, 2005). This meant that, in line with recommendations from Maxwell (2005: 96) and Crang (2005b: 222), I began my data analysis before engaging in any formal coding.

Armed with these annotated transcriptions and notes from my observations on the go-alongs, including those of bodily sensations felt during the film, I began the process of data analysis proper. As opposed to quantitative research in which the codes are set before the research is carried out, in qualitative analysis the researcher's task is to look through it, grouping together points repetition and singling out exceptional elements to generate codes (Cope, 2005: 225; Crang, 2005b: 224). In my case, this was achieved through a laborious process of reading and re-reading the transcripts and field notes, highlighting areas of convergence and discordance between them. So much data is generated by qualitative research that it is well known to be unwieldy and hard to work with systematically (Brewer, 2000). For me, managing hundreds of pages of data involved a lot of photocopying, cutting and pasting, and even more post-it notes, as I attempted to convert the mess of research into something coherent while also maintaining its ambiguity (Law, 2004; Parr, 2001). This (literal) mess is of course now avoidable through the use of a digital tool such as NVivo, but having undertaken training in this process I decided against it because I wasn't able to get an over-arching sense of the data. This is not a criticism of the software — it is just that, for me, the materiality of the data is key to its analysis.

The codes produced through this process are not, of course, an end in themselves. What begin as 'descriptive codes' are then used to explore more abstract or 'analytic' codes (Cope, 2005: 224). Qualitative data analysis, then, is an on-going and iterative process (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Maxwell, 2005). It was after iteration four of analysing the go-along data that I realised my interviews could contribute quite a lot to the analysis and interpretation process. This stemmed from an engagement between them and my observation during analysis, and the developing theme of cinematic habitus that is discussed in Chapter Six. I was interested in how the two forms of data related, and the different themes arising from both. I did not include the interview data in the same analysis as that of the go-alongs, instead I submitted it to the same process and compared the developing codes and themes to offer a point of comparison. I did this partly because I wanted to explore the ways in which being at the cinema together might encourage different forms of talk and knowledge (ie. did it bring forth pre-reflexive, or taken for granted knowledges?), but also because I wanted to see the continuities between the two and make note of those points referenced in both.

Although much of practice is not just 'unsayable' but unspoken, speech – and conversation – is nevertheless an important part of practice. As such, rather than discount interview data, I draw on it frequently across the next three chapters as I present my analysis. Although I supplement it with observations, I do not discount participants' (our) capacity to be cognisant of, and capable of reflecting on, much of practice (Rose et al., 2010). However, there is also – as Bourdieu notes – much of practice that goes without saying and rarely makes it into our explanations of what we do. As such, despite drawing on this data in the following chapters it is

important to note that I would not have come to understand it in such a way had I not conducted go-alongs. Doing so enabled me to also observe the practice in the moment and access those pre-reflexive knowledges that constitute habitus, to think through the ways in which they relate to more reflexive biographical information.

In sum, for me, because of the different knowledges it encourages, the go-along affected not just the data collection but also the process of analysis. In this way, and as I have suggested, I found it a very productive method with which to work and think through my key questions. However, I also found that there was a key element of the method as practised that proved fundamental to its effectiveness in my research but which has not, thus far, been drawn out in the literature: disruption of embodied knowledge, or in Bourdieu's terms, practical logic.

2.4. Reflexion on the go-along: disruption as methodologically generative.

In order to ensure that my research met ethical requirements I sought and gained approval from the Open University's Human Participants and Materials Ethics Committee (HPMEC). While such approval is important, the formalisation of research ethics that it represents runs the risk of withdrawing all responsibility from the researcher 'in the field,' once they have received clearance (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 225-6; Thrift, 2003a: 120). Indeed, it seems clear that because the majority of ethical dilemmas arise in the *doing* of research and cannot be predicted beforehand, our ethical framework must be more fluid than that of ethics committees. As such, the far more important influence on my own research practice was the ethical stance provided by Bourdieu (1977, 1990a). While Bourdieu engages most explicitly with the issues of ethics in works not yet discussed in this

thesis – particularly *The Weight of the World* (1999) and *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (with Loic Wacquant, 1992) – a sense of ethical responsibility runs through all of his writing (Kauppi, 2000). Indeed, he seems to argue that embracing the ambiguous nature of practice rather than reverting to ostensibly definitive explanations of practice is itself a moral responsibility that all social scientists should accept if their research is to be considered ‘valid’ (1977: 140).

Not only does Bourdieu offer a critique of existing ‘scientific’ practice, outlined above, he also shifts the understanding of rigour in research. Instead of aiming for an absolute – and unrealistic – objectivity, we should instead take the demand for rigour to be a call for reflexivity, in which the researcher considers the impact they may have had on the outcome of their research, and the structures they may have applied, or not, to the practice under study (1977: 105). This should not, however, be taken to such a degree that the distance between researchers and researched is reinforced by reverting to a sense of the all-seeing, all-knowing author (Wacquant, 2004b; on the same issue, see Rose, 1997: 310). Further, this reflexivity is not limited to individual researchers, but is also about stepping outside of disciplinary conventions to acknowledge where the academic habitus may be skewing what is understood. It is about challenging our epistemic assumptions (Bourdieu, 1990a: 35). Importantly, this reflexion is distinct from *reflection*. It is not about looking back on research practice and writing yourself in, it is instead an on-going and active process that must be engaged throughout – a process that Bourdieu calls ‘participant objectification,’ in which researchers continually question and ‘objectify their own relation to the object’ of research (1990a: 34; see also Turner, 2000).

It is perhaps because of this that I found go-alongs in practice far more conflicted than the events described in the literature. However, partly in line with the different approach that Bourdieu suggests stems from such challenges, I found these moments of conflict the most productive when I came to analysing data. I hope that by including reflexions on my own practice throughout the three chapters that follow I come close to the ethical requirements inherent to Bourdieu's theory and vital to feminist research (Katz, 1994; Nast, 1994; Stanley and Wise, 1993; Haraway, 1988). But here I would like to dwell for a moment on what researching reflexively can tell us about the go-along as practised.

I have already explained that many of the claims made about the go-along in the existing literature rang true in my research, and I found it a productive tool through which to consider my questions. As I hope the following three chapters will testify, the method offered a significant contribution to the ways in which we might empirically study practice. Undertaking informal pre-interviews proved surprisingly productive too, in enabling me to use participants' statements to frame practical logic, which then helped get closer to the pre-reflexive knowledges that guided practice in the moment of my research. Combining the two offered a way of studying cinema as practice without – I hope – reverting to a sense of rules or structural analysis, while also avoiding the voluntarism associated with subjectivist understandings. Key to this was not just those seemingly embedded memories and knowledges that emerged in our conversations, but also the ways in which our bodies moved about the cinema. Being able to interview in situ and watch what participants did at the cinema enabled me to tune into the difference in habitus and immanence in practice that, Bourdieu (1977, 1990a) claims, is often lost in research.

This leads me to an element of the go-along that I found fundamental to the method as practised: the confrontation of difference between researcher and researched. Because my go-alongs required me to accompany participants as they undertook what for most of them was a treasured practice, I was struck throughout my research by the sense that I was in some way invading. I *felt* in the way. I was familiar with this sensation from go-alongs undertaken as part of my MRes research and, although difficult in the moment, it was precisely this uncomfortable physical closeness that I found methodologically productive. It ended up producing a research context in which it was very difficult to not objectify my relationship to the object of research as the more I tried to ‘fit in’ the more it emphasised the incongruity between my own practical understanding of cinema and that of participants. It meant that I couldn’t avoid confronting not just their embodied relationship to the space and the constitution of cinema, but also my own and the ways in which we co-constituted each other’s practice and the film on the screen. This emergent sense of difference between me and participants, and the awkwardness of my body in ‘their’ practice was for me very productive and led to many of the findings discussed in the following chapters. It is, however, not referred to in any of the existing literature on the go-along.

In fact, there seems to be the opposite assertion. As discussed earlier, in thinking through the engagement with place on a go-along Pink (2008a: 193) suggests that by getting closer to other people’s embodied perceptions through shared experiences we can ‘begin to make places similar to theirs and thus feel we are similarly emplaced’. I had quite a different experience – in my research the accessing of others’ perceptions of cinema space stemmed from a disruption of my own pre-reflexive practical perception, a disruption that threw it into relief.

Referencing the physical invasion involved in research, Coffey points out that, 'As cultural boundaries are negotiated, so too are boundaries of the body. At a very simple level, the ethnographer has to sit or stand or lie *somewhere*... fieldwork often invokes the physical awkwardness of the body' (1999: 73). As suggested, in my experience, this awkwardness was caused by an embodied assertion of difference – as opposed to the affinity Pink (2008a) implies – when confronted with what might be considered 'shared' sensorial stimulants. Rather than these differences disrupting empathy, however, I felt that by engaging them I was able to get closer to understanding the embodied practice of the women I was with, and simultaneously become more aware of my own practical logic.

In addition to the reflexivity in practice encouraged by Bourdieu, there are two other possible reasons for this sense of difference and disruption having arisen particularly strongly in my research and not that described in the literature outlined above. The first is two-pronged. The age gap between me and participants – which at times extended to nearly 60 years – meant that we not only had different levels of physical mobility, but that we also belonged to different 'modes of generation' (Bourdieu, 1977, an issue discussed at length in the following chapter and Chapter Seven). The second is perhaps more banal. I was researching a practice that I regularly undertook outside of a research context and had attended both cinemas that became sites of my research. Therefore, I had my own pre-reflexive, taken for granted ways of practising cinema that were brought to the fore by doing so in a different context and engaging another's ways of doing the same. In this way, while my experience of go-alongs left me explicitly aware of the importance of bodily communication in research events, it also served to

highlighted the different, and shifting, politics of embodiment and affect (cf. Tolia-Kelly, 2006).

While arguments for empathetic embodiments are persuasive and highlight an important potential of the go-along, Bondi (2003) warns that the balancing act required for genuine empathy is in fact very complex and difficult to achieve. It is important not to assume it has been, she argues, because doing so can inadvertently reproduce oppressive power relations (Bondi, 2003: 66). In this way, it seems worth broadening Pink's (2007) argument out to include the empathy that comes from a point of difference, not affinity. This embodied difference produced similar insights into spatial perceptions as those Pink (2007a) describes, but from quite a different starting point. In this way, our methods of recording data may have divided us on some issues, but we eventually arrived at similar understandings of the benefits of go-alongs.

2.5. Conclusion: The value of studying cinema at the cinema.

I started this chapter with a key question for this thesis. With all the emphasis on pre-reflexive and embodied knowledge that drives it, how might we empirically study practice? The first half of my discussion outlined arguments made in literature on my chosen method – the go-along. My hope is that the description of the method in the first half of this chapter provides a persuasive argument for why I chose to adopt it as my primary method. The discussions in section two are intended to provide a sense of the context of research that can be drawn on throughout the following three chapters as I discuss the findings from my empirical research. Each chapter is organised around an overarching theme that arose in data analysis. These do not represent an exhaustive account of the data or the

themes it provoked and I could have woven many alternative narratives in this thesis. However, I have focused on those that spoke most clearly to my research questions and the concerns outlined in the preceding chapters.

The next chapter moves on to explore the overarching theme of an emergent mode of generation at the cinema. It is in this chapter that I attempt to provide a sense of the bodily affinities across participants, as well as suggestions of shared practical logic of cinema that emerged through data analysis. In doing so, I explore the question ‘how might differentiated bodies practise cinema-going differently?’ while also laying some of the groundwork for the discussions in the following two chapters. Chapter Six moves on to discuss the theme of cinematic habitus by exploring cinema-going practices across life as well as the memories and pre-reflexive knowledges that the films we watched together appeared to evoke. Exploring these themes through work on embodied spectatorship, I confront the question ‘how is film representation experienced in practice?’ and attempt to integrate notions of difference from the previous chapter into my analysis. Finally, in Chapter Seven I discuss the theme of the sensual geographies of cinema space by exploring not just the recurring theme of different productions of the building through differently embodied practice, but also the constitution of the space on the screen in the moment of viewing. In this way, this chapter attends to both my question ‘how are the spaces of cinema constituted?’, as well as, to a lesser extent ‘how is film representation experienced in practice?’ and ‘how might differentiated bodies practise cinema-going differently?’

Having thus discussed my key findings from empirical research, I move on in the conclusion to this thesis to finally consider the questions asked, and further

discuss the effectiveness of the go-along in answering the question ‘how might we study practice empirically?’

Chapter Five. Somatic norms, modes of generation and the practical logic of cinema

This thesis began with the paradox raised by gerontology's analyses of films: that despite the majority of films being distinctly ageist the fastest-growing cinema audience in the UK aged 45 and over. In the first chapter, I explored existing literature on film, cinema-going and audiences to show (some of) the insights offered by gerontology, film and cinema studies, and geography. Out of this literature arose three key elements that appeared fundamental to any understanding of cinema as practice: the film on the screen, the lived body of the audience and the viewing space. As it stands, there are very many studies that productively explore one or two of these themes, but only a couple that offer a consideration of all three in a contemporary context (Boyle 2010, 2009; Srivinas, 2010a, 2010b, 2002, 1998). This thesis is an attempt to address this gap by exploring cinema as a spatial and embodied practice. My engagement with the literature, read through Bourdieu's theory of practice, led to me asking three key questions about cinema. In this, the first of three empirical chapters, I will use my data to productively engage the existing literature and Bourdieu's theory of practice to explore the question 'how might differentiated bodies practise cinema differently?'

Concerned as he was with understanding the enduring stratifications in society without reverting to either a subjective or objective model, an understanding of difference is fundamental to Bourdieu's (1977, 1990a) theory of practice. He suggests that such distinction between social groups is generated by and through practice co-constituted by habituated dispositions integrated in the body. While

class is the social difference of key concern to Bourdieu (1984, 1977), feminists have found his theory a productive framework through which to think the gendered habitus (Adkins, 2004; Lovell, 2000; McNay, 1999; Moi, 1991), and researchers have similarly employed his ideas to overcome problematic theoretical divisions in work on ethnicity (Cederberg, 2012; Erel, 2010; Connolly et al., 2009; Bentley, 1987). Combined with my interest in the politics of ageing, it is perhaps not surprising that my research suggested a form of embodied difference as a strong theme. However, studying practice in the moment gives a lived and somewhat fluid understanding of distinction and I was surprised throughout my research by the apparent similarity across the embodiments of participants, despite significant 'objective' markers of difference.

In section one, I outline these 'objective' differences between participants and the demographic diversity between cinemas. In relation to my question, and certain readings of Bourdieu's theory, it could easily be assumed that the marked disparities outlined, for example in economic capital among audience members, result in differentiated audience practices appropriate to social group. In practice, however, while the 'social scenes' (Puwar, 2007) were distinct, at each cinema I found a bodily affinity across audiences. As such, the demographic diversity becomes significant here, not as a determining force in practice, but instead precisely because it did not seem to produce *significant* difference in cinema as practice at the matinees under study. Interrogating this, I came to see it as an in-the-moment enactment of a distinct 'mode of generation' (Bourdieu, 1997) through which these women shared a social identity despite the 'objective' differences between them. While, of course, this does not mean that the other markers of difference are irrelevant, it is this emergent mode of generation that I think has

most to offer my question and which I am keen to draw out and explore in this chapter. I begin my discussion of this apparent affinity between participants in section two, with descriptions of research events from each cinema in an attempt to provide a *sense* of the events – both go-alongs and matinees – in practice.

In section three I draw on these vignettes, and observation notes, to explore the sense of embodied difference I experienced on go-alongs. In doing so I suggest that such difference is in part produced in practice through pre-reflexive adherence to a different (generational) ‘somatic norm’ (Puwar, 2001) of femininity. This could, of course, be felt in all practices so in section four I build on my argument by taking it back to the specifics of cinema and discussing the public (as in extra-domestic) nature of the practice, as compared to domestic viewing. All participants made a clear hierarchical distinction between the two, one that to me suggested a generational habitus – a practising of cinema-going distinct to the shared history of this age-class (Bourdieu, 1977). Important here is that, with Bourdieu (1984, 1977), my data suggests that in this instance ‘age’ is not so much determined by chronology but a social age that is being practically (re)constituted in part through cinema-going. One of the ways in which the generation of a collective identity was particularly tangible was through expressions of film taste. The final section offers an analysis of participants’ assertions of those tastes and associated bodily responses as we watched films, arguing that taste is co-constituted by the affective dimension of habitus, one built up through historically, generationally, specific inculcation of appropriate and inappropriate images at the cinema.

In sum, I suggest here that differentiated bodies do not practise cinema differently in a way that can be mapped and predicted. Instead, such differentiation is emergent *through* practice. The differentiation practised, of course, depends on

the relationship between habitus and field but for these women in this specific practice I would like to suggest that while other elements of habitus remain important, the key distinction being enacted is not one relating to class, ethnicity or race but is instead focused on *modes of generation*.

As average life expectancy continues to increase in the UK, and with it the 'Fourth Age', older people are encouraged to 'stay active to stay young' with consumer culture providing an seemingly endless array of tools for 'ageing successfully' and maintaining a youthful look. All of this creates an enduring pressure among retirees to remain active and avoid physical signs of ageing for as long as possible, to maintain social value and stave off becoming a burden on the state or family (Clarke and Warren, 2007; Calasanti and Slevin, 2006; Katz, 2000; Hugman, 1999). In this context the themes discussed below suggest the practical logic of cinema for participants is in part the fulfilment of this inculcated responsibility. For this audience, the collective identity co-constituted with cinema as practice (pre-reflexively) provides distinction from the (marginalised and burdensome) 'fourth-age' (Townsend et al, 2006; Hugman, 1999). Importantly, such a distinction is produced not just by arrival at 'old age' and a need to identify oneself against the infirm other — instead, it relates to life-long practices and the different habitus developed by this generation compared to the one that came before it. As such, this chapter is not just about the 'function' of such distinction, it is about its genesis across life (Lizardo, 2011).

This is perhaps a strong claim, and it no doubt requires explanation. I begin, then, with an outline of the demographic diversity between and within audiences at each cinema.

1. Demographic diversity: markers of social difference at the Rio and Clapham Picturehouse.

While much of this thesis may appear to put all participants into one social group (women over-60) this is not my intention. There are some broad differences in the class, race and ethnicities of participants that serve to indicate their diversity and avoid presenting them as homogenous. The embodied affinity across participants that emerged in my research – and which is the focus of this chapter – arose *despite* these differences but I do not wish to suggest that such differences didn't exist and are irrelevant to cinema as practice. As such, in this section, I outline the key areas of diversity along 'objective' markers of difference across and within the two cinemas in order to more fully explore the ways in which the effect of such positions was attenuated as a shared mode of generation and collective identity appeared to be co-constituted with cinema as practice.

As the employment histories outlined in Appendix One might suggest, participants who attended the Clapham Picturehouse on the whole had higher levels of economic capital than those recruited at the Rio. The majority of the women I went to the Clapham Picturehouse with had access to private- or public-sector final salary pensions in addition to their state provisions. Indeed, most of these women had retired from a career in the civil service during which all, bar one, had been promoted from junior secretary or typist to senior positions. Others were not quite as economically privileged but nevertheless had undertaken stable careers in the public sector, while Joyce was a senior academic administrator and Laretta a production coordinator. By contrast, participants at the Rio overwhelmingly relied on state benefits and financial support from their children, several of whom were in well-paid employment. The majority of participants had been employed in the care

or catering profession. Others had been housewives, supported financially by husbands who more often than not had been employed in low-paid manual labour (or in Janet R's case as a Pastor). While Lynda, Joanne and Rama had slightly higher incomes, few participants were economically independent, and all were openly concerned by the financial implications of retirement.

Understood through Bourdieu (1984), this does not mean that we can make assumptions about participants' positions – as I have shown, economic capital is not the sum of class. Cultural capital, gained among other things through education, is also, if not more, important. While I would have described the majority of participants at the Clapham Picturehouse as middle class, understood through Bourdieu (1984) their position is not so clear as many 'worked their way up', beginning careers in junior positions, with limited education, and retiring in senior positions with substantial cultural capital. Their capital shifted significantly across life. Indeed, while I would describe most participants at the Rio as working class there was no 'perfect' class division that could be identified between cinemas because while there might be shared levels of economic capital, cultural capital varied across participants. In addition to class differences and differences in economic capital across and within cinema audiences, there was a profound difference along racial and ethnic lines.

While all participants at the Clapham Picturehouse were white, mainly white British, the women recruited at the Rio were more racially and ethnically diverse: four participants were black, one south Asian and two Italian. This broadly reflected the level of diversity found in the audience at each cinema — across seven months of conducting research at the Clapham Picturehouse I saw one non-white person attend, and he was a young black man; at the Rio, meanwhile,

approximately a third of the audience was non-white, and there was greater diversity among the white ethnicities too (see Appendix One). In their exploration of quality of life among older people, Moriarty and Butt (2004) highlight that embodied norms generate exclusionary structures for non-white races and non-‘native’ ethnicities. In later life, being a member of an ethnic minority can constitute being ‘a minority within a minority’ (Blakemore, 1997: 35). Add gender in to the mix and you are triple marginalised, creating an ‘ethnic-gender hierarchy’ in later life (Moriarty and Butt, 2004: 732). It is, then, perhaps unsurprising that all non-white participants were found at the cinema within a population that is predominantly working class and/or with limited economic capital.

All non-white participants arrived to the UK during the 1950s and 1960s, the peak years of mass immigration from former colonies. In their study of race and ethnicity in later life, Blakemore and Boneham (1994) point out that, due to post-war mass immigration (a system brought to an abrupt end with the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act and the 1972 Immigrants Act), this is the first generation in the UK with a substantial population of non-white older people. Unlike future generations, the majority of this population migrated to, rather than being born in, the UK.

Laurice, Mavis, Ethel and Susan came to Britain as economic migrants from the Caribbean — Laurice, Mavis and Susan from Jamaica, and Ethel from Dominica. Rama meanwhile arrived as a refugee from India after years spent in a refugee camp following partition in 1947. Arriving when they did, these women faced a hostile reception from a majority white society that, following centuries of colonialist discourse characterising black people as wild and uncivilised and/or exotic had inculcated a racist attitude towards this hyper-visible Other — a characterisation in which film played a central role (Cederberg, 2012; Puwar, 2001;

on film see Stam, 2000; Pines, 1997; Shohat, 1991). The history, politics, effects and affects of race relations in Britain are topics beyond the scope of this thesis. I mention this very basic information here because if habitus is our past and relationship to objective structures made body, then being Black or Asian in a white majority racist society will have significant impact on embodiment and practice.

How, though, might this affect our understanding of cinema as practice? Different (ethnic and class) habitus may have significant impact. As Bourdieu explains in relation to sport and class habitus:

‘Because agents apprehend objects through the schemes of perception and appreciation of their habitus, it would be naive to suppose that all practitioners of the same sport (or any other practice) confer the same meaning on their practice or even, strictly speaking, that they are practising the same practice’ (1984: 208).

Conflict, however, does not tell the full (hi)story of migration to the UK and, as I argue below, a certain solidarity appeared to exist among the audience at the Rio that suggests a life shared in an ethnically mixed local community – hinting at a layered habitus. Indeed, these matinees seem to offer an example of the ‘conviviality’ thought by Paul Gilroy (2004) to be fundamental to multiculturalism. As Nayak explains, such cohesion can depend on ‘the feelings and affective capacities that might build up through these performances [of social interactions] over time’ (2011: 555) – an inculcated cohesion that may, in part, have been generated in the practising of cinema and come to form at least part of habitus.

While I do not wish to deny the significance of the ‘social conditions of existence’ so fundamental to habitus, then, I would like to emphasise that habitus is multi-dimensional and that different dimensions will be drawn out in relation to particular fields (Bourdieu, 1977). In their study of the ethnic habitus, Blakemore and Boneham (1994: 8) also suggest that dimensions of habitus will shift in significance, as certain elements are pre-reflexively brought to the fore through practice. Nayak (2011) similarly argues that once we see racism and race as emerging through affect and emotion – of a feeling in the body – then race becomes a ‘floating signifier’ and the task becomes to ask ‘under what conditions it is summoned-to-life and allowed to materialise within time and place’ (2011: 554). Although important, then, race, class and ethnic habitus are not determining, and do not exist in essential, unchanging form.

I have dwelled on these instances of demographic diversity here because as Srivinas (2010) points out so well, such difference is not just at the level of individuals. Instead, because the cinema is a public, communal activity, who is in the audience and what they are doing sets the tone of the event and, to borrow a term from Puwar (2007), generates distinct ‘social cinema scenes’. This is important because, as Hubbard (2003a; 2002) shows, the ‘social cinema scenes’ practised serve to maintain a pre-reflexive distinction of cinemas and their audiences along cultural lines (Puwar, 2007; Hubbard, 2002: 1257; 2003a: 267). However, we should not make assumptions about the lines along which such distinctions may be drawn. With this diversity of race, class and ethnicity, it might be assumed that the focus of this chapter would be the ways in which such differences influenced cinema as practice. Instead, I found that such ‘scenes’ were constituted in particular ways through cinema and did not necessarily pre-exist this

practice. Indeed, as suggested, far more significant in my findings was a sense of affinity between the embodied practices of cinema — a similitude all the more pertinent because it seemed to exist in spite of such ‘objective’ markers of difference, and the significant disparity in material conditions they imply.

In other practices of cinema, ethnic or class differences might be clearly asserted, either to align with a group and/or to define habitus against it, and issues of race more profoundly felt. In this field though, in this context, and with this audience, ethnic and class dimensions of habitus appeared to lessen in significance. I will argue that despite overarching differentiated habitus, it is the shared generational dimension that is fundamental to the social identity emergent in the public space and practice of cinema. My research suggests that this practical production of a unity between diverse audiences, drawn out in the collective space of the cinema, offers the enactment and pre-reflexive assertion of a distinct mode of generation. To begin to evidence this claim, I offer two vignettes from my research. I provide them partly to give a sense of the research and cinema events, but also so that I can engage the lived nature of cinema in the discussion that follows, during which I outline my argument by offering analysis of the embodied difference I found emergent across my time researching at the cinema.

2. Writing practice – two accounts of going to the cinema.

While I have discussed the methodological commitments attached to working with Bourdieu, this is the first moment in which I have to confront the issues raised by how we might then write practice. Bourdieu’s theory offers a distinctly integrated understanding of the body-mind, and requires that we decrease the focus on oral accounts usually associated with ethnographic writing, maintaining an equal (or

greater) attention to what people do. Chapter Four described his insistence that this must be a reflexive process, avoiding where possible – or at least acknowledging – our desire to render social phenomena as logical or coherent and instead embracing the ambiguity of practice. This is one thing during the conduct of research – ensuring, as I hope to have done through the go-along, that you watch what people do as much as you listen to what they say about what they do, and question your research practice as you go – but it also requires a careful writing practice that avoids leaning entirely on oral accounts, which he argues can deaden the active nature of practice and the ‘immanent ends of collective action’ (Bourdieu, 1990a: 33). Instead, to support analysis, we must attempt to somehow maintain the lived (embodied) nature of practice and avoid representing it as a pre-existing ‘fait accompli’ (Bourdieu, 1977: 3).

Here, as I attempt to write cinema as practice(d), I have tried to tie oral accounts with an embodied analysis of what was done. While much of the following does draw on quotations, I don’t think that this needs to suggest a flattening effect – talk is very much an active part of practice and I hope my use of quotes from participants maintains at least some of the vibrancy with which they were originally spoken. However, to ensure I avoid privileging what the women I went to the cinema with said over what they did, I begin with two vignettes – one of my go-along to the Rio with Edith, the other of my trip to Clapham Picturehouse with Janet. As explained in the introduction, these are intended to evoke a sense of being at the cinema that I can draw on not just in the following discussion but also throughout the following chapters.

2.1 Going to the cinema with Edith.²²

Edith and I went to the Rio Cinema for their monthly matinee. A fixture in her calendar, Edith has been coming to these events every month since they began five years ago. On the day of our go-along, Edith had just returned from a week away with her son and this cinema trip represented the beginning of a return to her usual schedule. Afterwards Edith was off to 'keep fit', and she was looking forward to a dance class tomorrow. One of Edith's favourite things about the matinees is the free tea and cake that they provide and, as she joined the extensive queue to collect her allocation, she spoke freely about the trip, as well as her son's marital prospects.

After collecting her tea and cake we walked upstairs to the balcony, Edith cautiously taking time to navigate each step. Once upstairs, she located her usual seat (an aisle seat, three rows back from the balcony edge), held onto the seat backs and manoeuvred through the crowded rows of chairs until reaching it. I followed Edith's expert route and sat down beside her. Although the balcony was already buzzing, it was a good 45 minutes before the film was due to start so I took the opportunity to speak to Edith about the cinema. She was wonderfully chatty, and despite my continual nerves, put me at ease with her memories of sneaking into her favourite cinema with her best friend when she was a teenager. All the while, I tried to watch what Edith was doing – her careful balancing of the tea on the floor by her feet, her sporadic picking at the cake that she announced she was saving until the film starts, and her casual glancing around, I assume for

²² Both vignettes raise many issues about practice above and beyond those discussed in this chapter and I return to them in later chapters.

the friends and acquaintances she often attends with, but who in fact did not show on this occasion.

When the film started, Edith squared up to the screen, sat back in her seat as though to let the film wash over her, and set to the cake. She watched intently and with little expression for the most part, methodically eating her cake and blowing on her tea as though trying to cool it down. Occasionally we would exchange a glance or comment but for the most part we were focused on the film. The more I watched Edith, the more I noticed subtle movements made in response to scenes in the film. Perhaps most clearly, I noticed that Edith slowly picked at her paper cup of tea whenever there was a sex scene on screen. Her facial expression did not appear to change, but she was (consciously or unconsciously) evidently affected in some way by the somewhat explicit (and unexpected) nudity on screen.²³

When the film finished, and the lights came up, Edith moved as though she had just been woken up. I noticed my own arms stretch out and felt as though my body was involuntary responding to hers. Edith started immediately to talk about the film and we stayed in our seats discussing it and her favourite films for the next half an hour. Edith had not enjoyed *Closing the Ring*. Set in a war she had lived through, she thought it was a completely unrealistic depiction, and entered into some stories of her own experience. She complained about what she felt were unnecessary levels of nudity and suggested that the previous month's film *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* had been more enjoyable. She used the screen a lot to indicate her points and the space of the Rio became part of my imagining of her

²³ Interestingly, I had watched this film with a participant during my MRes research and experienced a similar response.

memories. After a while the ushers came upstairs to clear the seats so we began to leave the cinema. As she stood up I noticed Edith, visibly stiff, expertly used the seats around her and, as we walked, to either side, in order to navigate the space with her slightly weakened body. Watching her as she once more elegantly tackled the stairs – one at a time – I became aware of the ways in which she transformed a space familiar to me into something else. The walls became supports not just for the building but for her, the seats became banisters. Through this I became aware of the mobilities that I take for granted, as well as the very different ways apparently functional spaces are transformed not just through different practices, but different practising bodies.

As we reached the foyer, Edith turned to me, once again authoritative and forthright. I thanked her for taking part, and she set off in the direction of home, waving goodbye to Jemma, the event organiser, as she left.

2.2 Going to the cinema with Janet.

Janet and I went to Clapham Picturehouse for one of their twice-weekly 'Silver Screens' days. We met in a French-themed café across the road from the cinema and, as we had a coffee at one of their pavement tables, Janet seemed very relaxed, waving at waitresses serving other tables, and having casual conversations with ours. She explained that going to this café was very much part of what for her is a monthly ritual. As we walked slowly across to the Picturehouse, I was surprised by the disruption of the fluidity of Janet's social self by the stiffness of her body. As I pondered this Janet continued to talk and explained that one of the things she loves about Silver Screens was that it gave her an excuse to go to the cinema in the middle of the day, but that she avoids it entirely during school

holidays. As we entered the cinema Janet opened the door for me, as though she was inviting me in, and strode confidently, if slowly, over to the bar/box office. As the staff made her regular cappuccino, Janet chatted easily about her upcoming trip to Italy while choosing her biscuits from the selection provided free to all attendees of Silver Screens. She put these in a napkin and wrapped them up, explaining that she liked to eat them during the film.

All set with her biscuits and coffee, and me with my tea, Janet guided me almost without looking over to the correct cinema screen and once again opened the door to let me in. She walked directly over to a middle seat in a row equidistant to the screen, at the back of the almost empty cinema, and patted the chair next to her. Janet doesn't enjoy watching trailers so she timed our entrance to hit the last two before the film started. During these, Janet smiled at me in the half-darkness and lay out her biscuits on the armrest between our seats, insisting that I help myself. As she settled into her chair, Janet's breathing was quite wheezy and loud, and her body rigid, seemingly uncomfortable. She leaned stiffly back into the chair at what seemed like almost a 45 degree angle. As the film started, this position was essentially unchanged but it somehow seemed to shift from stiff and uncomfortable to relaxed and open, as though it is the optimum pose from which to receive the full scale of the film on the screen.

Janet stayed in this position as *Letters to Juliet* continued, changing only to sip her coffee and delicately pick up a biscuit from the armrest. As she did these things, her eyes and body remained focussed on the screen. Once she finished her coffee, Janet replaced it with a tissue, which she clung to for the rest of the film. As the narrative came to its conclusion, involving the successful reunion of long-lost lovers, Janet had a big smile on her face and began to move the tissue around in

her hand, using her fingers to roll it into a circle. The rest of her body remained perfectly still and I only realised that she was crying because she moved her hand to her face and used the tissue to expertly wipe away tears. Much like Edith, then, what Janet was doing with her hands was indicative of being moved by what was on the screen, albeit for different reasons.

When the film finished and the lights came on, Janet shook herself and stretched her face, opening her eyes and mouth wide. It once again had the feeling of waking up, and again my body responded with a similar stretching of limbs and shaking of the head. Janet watched all of the credits and only began to get up once the lights came fully on. She eased herself up, expertly using the arms rests to support her weight, and then we began to walk slowly towards the door. As Janet used the seats to pull her up the slightly slanted floor, I felt as though I was towering above her, acutely aware of our different bodies and the way in which they were navigating the space. While my description of Janet's use of the space might imply struggle and work, it was instead fluid and 'natural', a skilled body working with the material space to improve its mobility. Indeed, as she walked, Janet chatted freely about the landscapes she had enjoyed in the film, which had reminded her of her recent holiday to Italy, and got her excited about one coming up.

We strolled over to the café area together, Janet indicating her usual seat – the booth on the left closest to the bar – and strolling off to the bathroom while I ordered some more hot drinks (a post-film coffee was another ritual of Janet's). As we sat in the café drinking, we spoke about the film. Janet thought it was a bit schmaltzy, and found the developing relationship between two young characters completely unbelievable. She had become fixated on the size of the male actor's

feet and felt they disrupted the suspension of disbelief somehow. She had been moved by the older characters' reunion, however, and she now thought that this was because it made her think of her own sense of lost love since her partner's death 10 years ago. Speaking about this film led to conversations about her partner, but also about the trips to visit her friend in Italy which had helped her cope. As we left Janet once again opened the door for me, and nodded goodbye to the bar staff who waved warmly. She walked me to the tube – hosting me until the last – and then set off on her walk home.

3. Enacting differentiation: modes of generation, somatic norms and film taste.

In his discussion of ageing and ethnicity in Britain, Blakemore (1997: 31) suggests that 'there is a possibility that older people as a growing minority in an increasingly age-categorised society, will form their own subculture', although he adds that this is unlikely to 'develop very far beyond the sharing of certain cultural products or styles'. While I am reluctant to reproduce the tendency in work on ageing to treat older people as a homogenous group, from my research it seems that shared 'cultural products' are all that is needed at the cinema to co-constitute a collective audience identity (Moriarty and Butt, 2004: 730). Following our trips together, I was consistently left with a *sense* of difference — but rather than it being between the different audience members differently positioned in social space, it was between 'them' and me. It seemed to me that despite the difference described above, there was an overriding similarity — a mode of generation — that constitutes and is constituted by significantly different practices and embodiments to my own. Drawing on the vignettes above, in this section I first discuss this sense of embodied difference between me and participants, before moving on to

explorations of practical examples involving film taste and the significance of cinema-going as compared to domestic viewing practices.

3.1. Modes of generation and somatic norms of femininity.

On meeting Edith at the cinema, I became very aware of my physical form. Edith was dressed in a fitted black trouser suit, a plain white shirt worn with a black and white silk scarf draped over it and black court shoes with a gold buckle. Her hair was died white and was neatly set close to her head. Dangling delicately from her elbow was an elegant handbag with a clasp that matched her shoes. Having felt nervous but prepared on meeting her I was suddenly thrown into an awareness of my body and appearance as an oscillating presence. In some ways, I felt physically protective of this little, frail-seeming person; my far larger frame, physically strong and solid, gave me a certain corporeal superiority. But in many other ways I immediately felt inferior in comparison to such an elegant and self-assured woman. My carefully planned outfit suddenly seemed disastrous.

Standing next to Edith the shoes I had selected for their smartness appeared battered and scruffy; the full skirt I had chosen accentuated my largeness and seemed invasive of Edith's apparently carefully constructed compactness. My embodiment as a (relatively) mobile, large, generally clumsy and inelegant (relatively) 'young' person was thrown into relief, a sensation that became more extreme once in the auditorium.

The seats at the Rio were designed in the 1930s and are far smaller than those you would find in a contemporary cinema. They are also much closer together. And, while Edith fit perfectly into her allotted space, I felt as though I did not. Not because I am physically too big, but because, symbolically, I took up more space.

On a material level, I had more ‘stuff’ with me, an unnecessarily large bag, a big coat, a billowing skirt and so on, but, less concretely, there was also a ‘noise’ about me that came to occupy the space in a disruptive and awkward manner. My body, my gestures, my posture, way of sitting, walking etc. was somehow louder and I felt it left a bigger imprint in the space. As mentioned, I had been to the Rio many times to watch films with friends, but these chairs have never before made me feel this. It was a relational sensation, one that emphasised difference rather than empathy. To me, it spoke of different generations, to differently practised feminities – not just of differently aged bodies, but also of different *embodiments*. It is this sensation of difference, which recurred across go-alongs, that I found so fundamental to the insights provided by the method. It is also key to considering how differentiated bodies might practise cinema-going differently – the question that drives this chapter.

In discussing this, I would like to borrow Puwar’s (2001) use of the term ‘somatic norm’. Engaging the concept to explore the experience of black senior civil servants, Puwar (2001: 652) describes it as the ‘corporeal imagination of power as naturalised in the body of white, male, upper/middle class bodies’, and suggests the ways in which such a norm has been pre-reflexively assimilated by her participants, particularly through speech acts. Relating the concept to Bourdieu’s theory, she insists that such assimilation should not be understood as a form of voluntarism. Instead, ‘we need to think of it as acquired slowly through time by [black civil servants] moving through white ‘civilised’ spaces [of Whitehall]. Eventually and gradually it becomes part of a habitus’ (2001: 663, 667). While Puwar (2001) suggests that this norm – of white, male, upper/middle class bodies – is one that we are all positioned in relation to, it is not difficult to imagine that

there is a layering of somatic norms among different habitus.²⁴ Broadening Puwar's (2001) concept through Bourdieu, I would like to suggest that the differences I sensed at the cinema related to differing somatic norms of femininity across modes of generation.

Before discussing this further it is perhaps important to note that in doing so I do not wish to suggest that modes of generation eradicate the diversity described above. Rather, as argued, it seems that they serve to attenuate it in a practice defined along age lines. The perceived similarity between women may have involved what Puwar (2001: 663) calls 'the centrifugal force of whiteness', resulting in a process of adaptation for minority bodies to achieve the somatic norm, playing down embodied cultural distinctions through practice — something exacerbated by my presence as a white middle-class woman and implicitly encouraged by the representations on the screen which, Stuart Hall has argued, can inculcate the feeling of self as Other for non-white audiences (Hall, 1989: 706–707). Further, while all participants may pre-reflexively aspire to the same norm, they do not have equal access to achieving it (Puwar, 2001). In suggesting a dimension of sameness among the habitus of participants, then, I do not deny that the cinema is a racialised and classed space. Instead, I suggest that at these matinees it is the *shared* dimension of habitus that is practically asserted.

I am by no means the first to suggest that this tangible difference in generational embodiments exists. Indeed, it is both a common sense observation and the

²⁴ Indeed, the original use stems from Hoetnik's (1967) term 'somatic norm image', which is broader and refers to 'the complex of physical (somatic) characteristics which are accepted by a group as its norm or ideal', allowing for diversity in somatic norms across social groups, but problematically (for this project at least) implying rational choice is involved in the adoption of such a norm (Baker, 1983: 205).

source material for the many stereotypes of older people that cultural gerontology has worked so hard to overcome (Featherstone and Hepworth, 2005). In Chapter Three I showed that Bourdieu (1984, 1977) suggests the shift in value of cultural capital across age-classes means that certain generational similarities in habitus produce shared dispositions that cut across the usually dividing parameters of social class. He argues that different modes of generation are produced in 'conditions of existence' that differ from those that came before or will come after, producing different generational habitus and embodiments (1977: 78). While I do not want to reproduce enduring homogenising notions of the 'little old lady', the overarching similarity in embodiment across women at both cinemas amounted to something rather simple and too pronounced to ignore: an almost determined neatness. It is important to stress that while this might be thought of as simply an issue of appearance, what is at stake for me here is not the distinction between an aged and 'non-aged' body. Rather it is an *embodiment* that speaks to generational habitus.

That this neatness was not limited to clothing is suggested by a comment from Ethel when she was telling me about her younger neighbour during our visit to see *The Red Shoes*:

If she's a friend like we're going out, I'd say 'come on put on your...' but she doesn't dress like that, always her jeans and trousers and, er, she dress like a man. Nothing to do with me but, you know, something is up.

This is indicative of an embodied difference because Ethel made this statement *while wearing trousers*. In doing so, she shows that although fashion is often used as a shorthand for thinking through differently embodied practices, the difference

is often not in what we are wearing, but in *how*. As Bourdieu explains it, '*Bodily hexis*, a basic dimension of the sense of social orientation, is a practical way of experiencing and expressing one's own sense of social value' – a value that changes across generational fields (1984: 476, my italics).

In their exploration of body language, Lamb and Watson (1979) directly suggest not only a relationship between a society's norms and fashion but also the relationship between fashion and the production of particular bodies. In doing so, they offer a way of thinking the somatic norm on generational terms that speaks to my findings. They argue that, 'for one generation to adopt the style of another is almost impossible. Mother and daughter both wear jeans ... yet it is almost impossible for her [the mother] to sit and stand like her daughter, because she has the habitual posture of the mermaid, derived from an upbringing suitable to a ... skirt, and not designed for the unashamedly bifurcated animal' (1979: 40). In this way they suggest that 'since posture is partly determined by the conventional postural norms [of fashion], and since these change from generation to generation, whole adjustment to them does not change, it is easy to understand how postural expression widens the generation gap, before the young or old opens their mouths' – a generational incarnation of the somatic norm (1979: 36; see also Blaikie's [1999: 8–9] concept of 'cultural time'). Twigg (2012) has recently argued the mutually constitutive relationship between fashion and ageing through an analysis of the ways in which the high street is adjusting to the growth of the 'grey market'.

To put this in Bourdieu-friendly terms, Lamb and Watson (1979) and Twigg (2012) show that while fashion is produced by and through practice, the practising of fashion also produces particular practising bodies and embodiments as they offer

implicit pedagogy of what is – and what is not – appropriate. This is the case for both men and women, and not just in the changing fashions of clothes. Bodily dispositions, embodiments, are shaped by and shape fashions and lived patterns of work, childrearing, dwelling, travelling and, among many other things of course, cinema-going. As Bourdieu (1984) explains:

‘The practical knowledge of the social world that is presupposed by ‘reasonable’ behaviour within it implements classificatory schemes..., historical schemes of perception and appreciation which are the product of the objective division into classes (age groups, genders, social classes) and which function below the level of consciousness and discourse’, in the body. (1984: 471).

This matters because it means that differences in our embodiments imply not just a natural ageing process but, rather, a naturalised way of being, inculcated across the life course. For example, significant changes in women’s rights across the last 60 years position me as woman differently to participants, a shift that co-constituted changing somatic norms of femininity and that is almost certainly partly responsible for my sense of our different embodiments.

The neatness I encountered at the cinema certainly extended beyond styling – hair, clothes, accessories and so on – to incorporate, more significantly, mannerisms and movement, generating a *sense* of delicacy and precision that was seemingly at odds with my own practice. While this was most pronounced among African-Caribbean²⁵ and white working-class participants, it was

²⁵ African-Caribbean identity is generally thought to have emerged in the 1970s as a singular identity for a heterogeneous group in order to produce stronger support networks in the face of racism (Blakemore, 1997: 30; see also Hall, 1989 for a discussion of the development of this

discernible in the practices of the majority of the women I attended the cinema with, with the notable exception of Joanne – her refusal to ‘conform’ being a conscious feminist act. Tea was sipped, cakes were nibbled, and stairs were deliberately and carefully climbed:

Janice (go-along observation): *At one point I found myself suddenly aware that I was leaning closely in towards Janice, I am amazed by how carefully she speaks, every word is enunciated clearly, but very softly spoken. Her features so delicately express... Suddenly aware of the loudness of my voice I found myself trying, and failing, to match such an approach*

Jane (go-along observation): *Not a small woman, Jane is incredibly discreet in her movements. I watched with awe as she navigated to the small table by the bar where the sugar and milk is. Subtly dexterous, she managed to carry a hot coffee in one hand while using the other for her stick. She didn't seem to even slightly disturb the flow of people despite the number battling to also get to the table and others standing inconveniently chatting... I attempt the same and within three steps have spilt boiling water all over my left hand.*

Neither of these examples, nor those of Janet and Edith above, should suggest timidity. Instead this delicacy was authoritative, it was in control, and it was quietly assertive. This was shared across the women in my study and was responsible for

cultural identity). It is important to note here, though, that while I often group the African-Caribbean women together due to congruence across their ‘objective’ positions and some practices, Ethel's conversations were littered with asides that defined her against Jamaican culture. For example: ‘But let's say now I was a Jamaican. I'm not Jamaican’, or ‘and I told her [a neighbour with whom she is arguing], “you're lucky, if I was a Jamaican” because you know what Jamaicans do. They don't care two hoots’. My intention is not to imply that ‘African-Caribbean’ is a homogenous group, any more than ‘White British’ is. It is more to group participants within broad social categories where they arose in the data and are significant to understanding cinema-going.

the sense of bodily affinity that seemed to lessen the immediate effects of the differences described above in the moment of practice.

To me, this suggests that ageing *is* cultural but it is also of the body – an argument that reflects recent developments in gerontology outlined in the second chapter (Twigg, 2004). Here though, I would like to argue that bodily ageing is not just about the wrinkles and grey hair or aches and pains that feature so heavily in stereotypes, but also in the way that bodies are shaped by culture over time — the comportments and dispositions of modes of generation adhering or aspiring to subtly shifting fashions in the shared somatic norm. As Bourdieu says, the oppositions between styles of dress between age cohorts, ‘expresses rather more than a simple generation gap’ (1984: 145). Symbolic capital reduces in old age, not just because of a biological process of bodily decline that is constituted negatively by a society that valorises youth, but also because our dispositions speak to earlier times. Our body becomes not just ‘old’ but ‘old-fashioned’. This is important for understanding cinema as practice in this context because it suggests cultural ageing is not just about appearance, it is also what one *does*. The act of going to the cinema for this audience is, in part, a continuation of what *feels* natural. And what feels natural is a product of history made body, a history that co-constitutes habitus and impacts upon practice in the present. In this way, just by being there the audience is already generating an affinity.

As Bourdieu explains the ‘systems of durable dispositions’, of the habitus function as the ‘principles of the generation and structures of practice’ (1977: 72). As such, what we do now is always in part constituted by our past practices. Since these vary from generation to generation, it makes sense that this past-in-the-present was evident in the doing of cinema. In his study of cultural taste, Bourdieu (1984)

himself found that difference in films seen and frequency of cinema attendance ran across age lines (1984: 19, 99). This is in part what leads Bourdieu (1993: 96-98; 1984: 140) to suggest that capital cannot be measured by education alone, and points to the inability to measure social position in any such formulaic terms. This is reflected in marketing and market research within the film industry, in which audiences are divided into age and gender cohorts, rather than class or ethnic categories (UK Film Council, 2009; Levy, 2001), and in the marketing concept of 'time signatures' which 'prescribes a different mindset for each cohort as it moves through time carrying with it sets of values specific to the period of its own socialisation' (Blaikie, 1999: 173). In my research, the similarities in practice along generational lines seem to relate to the films seen and frequency of cinema-going across life, to the genesis of habitus and associated taste (Bourdieu, 1984).

This relates to the two elements of cinema that I discuss in the following sections: the public nature of the practice and the significance of taste. Both of these can further evidence that a mode of generation is being practically enacted at the cinema and help explore the significance of this further. This is important for my project because if, as Sobchack (2004, 2000), Marks (2002, 2000) Bruno (2002) and Voss (2011) argue, films are understood through the body, then we must pay attention to the difference made by different practising bodies – and perhaps acknowledge that some forms of difference, or affinity, emerge in the moment of viewing. The next section, then, explores the habitual nature of attendance for participants. This is reminiscent of practices described by Kuhn (2002) in her oral history of cinema-going in the 1930s and 1940s, a habitual attendance that continued during the war and into the late 1950s – decades in which participants were going on their first trips to the cinema – and suggests an inculcated

relationship to cinema as practice. This came out most strongly in my research in the distinction between domestic and public viewing, one that I think is suggestive of a shared generational habitus generated through practice across life and drawn on in the public space of the cinema. In emphasising this public-ness, this theme also implies that the nature of cinema as an extra-domestic activity contributes to its practical logic for participants.

3.2. The public dimension of cinema and its relation to domestic viewing practices.

Cinema-going is differently practised across life. As I will show in the next chapter, the different stages engaged by participants correspond in many ways to those identified by Jancovich (2011) in his research with residents of Nottingham. They differ, however, in one important respect. When it comes to cinema-going after retirement, the most common way that Jancovich's respondents aged over-60 attended the cinema was in their role as grandparents. While some of the women I spoke to did take their grandchildren to the cinema they also, as I have suggested, habitually maintained their own independent cinema-going. Jancovich's (2011) respondents cited the dominance of young people, and the associated threats, as the reason for not attending the city centre cinemas. By contrast, the matinees at the Rio and Clapham Picturehouse clearly offered the women who took part in my research an opportunity to 'take over' the cinema-space, even with the small number of other audience members at the Picturehouse.

For Pam and Janet this meant a welcome avoidance of crowds, but for the majority it was an opportunity to engage in casual sociability – something that

became clear during our trips there together and arose strongly in my analysis of go-along data:

Theresa (go-along, before *Alice in Wonderland*): *I arrived to find Theresa, foot in plaster, stretched out in a booth chatting away to the bar staff. There is an easy familiarity between them. Theresa said she always comes on her own but clearly she is also always 'with friends.'*

Rama (go-along to *It's a Wonderful Life*): *She'd dressed up but not for me – she had her Arcola [a local theatre] acting class afterwards. Two of the people that do it with her were also there, sat in our row, and I was obviously disrupting their usual casual chats.*

Norma (go-along to *Salt*): *Watching Norma come towards the cinema, she's greeted by waves from staff at the café across the road and as we sat in the cinema café, Sandy [a staff member] came over for what seemed to be a regular chat. She had seemed so lonely to me when I interviewed her...*

These quotes reinforce the importance of the *public* nature of cinema-going. As a public practice often repeated in the same place, cinema-going encourages light and casual socialising, from which all participants clearly derived pleasure. And this is not just conjecture on my part; it was also expressed in their statements about attending the matinees:

Joanne (go-along, before *Nine*): *I love cinema, whatever it is, because, I think the main reason I love it is because you share it with a heck of a lot of people. It's not like sitting in the front room with a DVD or video, in fact I haven't even got a telly*

Susan (interview): It's nice to go there and you're not pay this big money...So there's no. I want to go there for friends...everything there is nice.

Pam (go-along, before *Inception*): Very often if Jill and I want to meet we'll look to see what's on ... she lives in Clapham over there and I live in Balham so it's an easy place to meet up and she goes here a lot, she loves the Clapham Picturehouse so it just sort of evolved really over a long period of time.

Such statements reinforced my own sense that an important appeal of the event for participants is the casual sociability offered at the cinema (Hubbard, 2001). Combined with habitual attendance it has developed into a distinct sense of feeling 'at home' on the part of my participants that seemed to translate into a very relaxed manner that was significant to the constitution of cinema space. Although I am interested in this symbolic extension of the domestic sphere into the cinema, discussed in Chapter Seven, here I would like to dwell on the significance of cinema-going as a public practice, assessed against actually watching at home.

With the exception of Joanne all participants owned a television that they watched regularly. Most cited soaps, cookery or news programmes as their preferred entertainment. Television viewing was most significant to African-Caribbean participants who were more likely to reference television programmes in our discussions than they were film. Many participants said they would watch a film on television if something of interest was on but this was generally described as less pleasing than watching at the cinema because of the potential for interruption by the telephone, visitors, families, sleeping, or domestic responsibilities. By far the

most common method of viewing films at home was on DVD. Indeed, the recent acquisition of, or search for, a new DVD was a frequent theme in our conversations. There is, of course, nothing unusual or spectacular about this; the production and distribution of DVDs is a multi-billion pound industry and almost certainly engages people across the age spectrum.²⁶ Something that differed from my own domestic viewing practices, however, was that DVDs were predominantly used as a way to watch old favourites, rather than new releases that participants had missed or chosen to skip at the cinema in favour of a DVD viewing.

When a film that interests me is released I make a decision about whether or not it is 'worth' a trip to the cinema, or if I'd rather just wait until it comes out on DVD.

Mine is not an unusual approach, I don't think, and can be seen as a more personal version of the decision made by distribution companies when they determine whether a film gets a cinema release or goes straight to DVD. For almost all participants, however, far and away the preferred way to consume any film is at the cinema, shifting to DVD only when they have reluctantly missed its public exhibition:

Lauretta (interview): We bought a lot of DVDs so we could watch them at home. But if they're new I think it's better, I prefer, going to see them on a huge screen I think it's, er, it's much more satisfying.

Janet (interview): If it's new it'll only be things I missed and wonder whether I should have watched and I'll check when they come on DVD

²⁶ Although, with the rise of streaming, downloads and torrents, this practice increasingly engages fewer members of younger generations (Lobato, 2011).

Lynda (go-along, before *Last Chance Harvey*): One [*Harry Potter*] is on tape and the other four are on DVD. But I've seen them all at the cinema. I want to see *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*, which is year 6.

The suggestion, as indicated by Laretta and summarised by Pam's quote below, is that watching a film on DVD is a lesser engagement so that, as Lynda implies above, DVDs become a way of revisiting favourite films rather than an alternative consumption strategy.

Pam (interview): I do tend to buy DVDs, um, not in huge numbers, but only if I've enjoyed a film I'd probably buy a DVD, um. Sometimes somebody will give me, like we didn't get to see *An Education* and Jill bought the DVD and gave it to me and said 'what do you think?' and I said 'rubbish' I didn't like it at all... But, you know, that was an instance where I only saw it on DVD and I always prefer to watch things at the cinema first.

The exception to this are Jenny and Wendy who both enjoyed 'movie nights' at home with their niece and grandchildren respectively, although this can be seen as an engagement with younger generations' viewing practices and domestic enactment of the sociability of the cinema that reduces the need for a public space (for an interesting discussion of the sociability and significance of movie nights see Jones, 2011). These viewing practices are important on two counts: first, the valorising of cinema-going over domestic viewing practices can be understood as a direct descendent of early film viewing practices undertaken a time when the cinema was the only option; second and relatedly the *public* nature of cinema-going has significance for this generation as, alongside other activities, it enables

the maintenance of a position in the civic sphere through familiar practice (on the first of these points see Allen, 2011).

Although television became mainstream by the late 1950s, and films became a regular part of the programming by the 1960s, the delay between cinema release and showing on television was so extensive that it would have merely reinforced the notion that domestic spaces are intended for 'second run' viewing (Maltby, 2011; Holmes, 2005). The same applies to the introduction of VHS, with the fast turnaround we know today only in place since the turn of the millennium, as DVD sales have become increasingly important to revenue and simultaneously increasingly threatened by piracy (Lobato, 2011). This chimes, of course, with Bourdieu's understanding of the habitus, as we inculcate practices appropriate to our social position in early life so that they, and our position in social space, become naturalised and continue to make *sense* (literally *feel* right) across life. In addition to this shared history, there is now an added shared dimension of the practical logic of cinema going: domestic viewing as compared to cinema-going seems to take on important connotations for this generation in later life as new taxonomies of opposition take hold (active/inactive, engaged/isolated, independent/burdensome), and 'getting out of the house' takes on new significance.

While this relates to a historically grounded shared taste in cultural activity – going to the cinema *feels* right – it seemed to relate to a shared taste at the cinema too: across the course of the interviews and go-alongs a distinct coherence among diverse participants was in their tastes in film, a coherence that proved important to the affinity I am attempting to describe here.

3.3. Bodily assertions of taste: the co-constitution of a mode of generation and cinema as practice.

While the women that I attended the cinema with were a diverse group, for whom the film was not universally relevant to cinema as practice, there were nevertheless definite commonalities across their asserted *taste in films*. For example, almost all of the women stated a dislike for (excessive) violence:

Joyce (go-along – as we watched the trailers before *Up in the Air*): ‘Oh, I don’t want to see this, *Invictus*, Oh, this is going to be good. I was worried it was going to be violent and wasn’t interested. This looks very inspirational’.

Wendy (interview): ‘my very favourite, the film I’ve seen more often than any other, and that’s about 14 or 15 times... Is *Some Like it Hot*. I can watch that, I love all the Billy Wilder movies. Those are probably my favourite. I like drama really, I like a bit of psychological stuff. I hate violence, can’t bear violence.

Ann (interview): What I call crash bang films that they have a lot of now, I tend to avoid. By crash bang I mean where there are lots of bangs and lots of crashes and things chasing, well no I like car chases, but excessive violence. No I can’t do that kind of thing – completely pointless. I need a film to have a bit of intelligence, a good script. That’s what a film has to have, and they’re fairly rare.

This should not be seen to represent conservatism, a rejection of any explicit or shocking content — Wendy’s love of thrillers and Ann’s enjoyment of a good car chase are indicative that this is not where such taste stems from. It is more an

insistence on context, on the justification for such content in a film. Pam expresses this well, I think:

Pam (go-along, before *Inception*): I probably wouldn't go and see anything I knew was going to be very violent, although I have seen, I did see an Italian film a couple of years ago, with Jill again, which was about the mafia in Italy, um, in Rome and it was incredibly violent but it was almost like watching an opera: it was so beautifully done and so dramatic and, you know, and of course it was in another language so that's always better, and that sort of overrode, a bit like, um, Martin Scorsese's *Goodfellas* I think, which is again incredibly violent but also somehow it's absolutely right for what it's talking about and it compels you to watch it. So, sometimes. But I wouldn't go and see something that's just overtly violent or trashy. No, I wouldn't.

These quotes, of course, suggest a relatively subtle threshold between acceptable and unacceptable content that could imply an individual, subjective analysis. My argument here, however, is that while these tastes are individually expressed, they speak to a collective cultural history and position the women – just as my tastes do me – within social space in particular ways. Indeed, the shared tastes I want to draw out here also chime with those found in the older members of families studied by Leder (2009) as she explored tastes in film among different generations in the UK and Germany. In both studies there was substantial dislike expressed for contemporary sex scenes, albeit with varying acceptance. Of my participants Theresa probably outlines this best:

Theresa (on a go-along, before *Alice in Wonderland*): Of course, it was much more evocative in that day and age. This now, that's really not evocative. Or I don't think it is. It was much more evocative and sensuous when it was what you didn't see, like the beach scene with Deborah Carr and Burt Lancaster. And *On the Waterfront*. Yes it was there, but you didn't see any sort of sex performance did you...The thought was there you see, but the deed was never done... And the ones that were overtly sexual, *Body Heat*, I thought that was erotic with it...I don't mind it, [the way sex is presented in film now] but let's just say it doesn't stimulate the romantic in me.'

Again, Theresa is not directly rejecting sex on the screen *per se*, just the tendency in contemporary films to err on the side of explicit representations. Here she says that a more subtle representation of sex is 'more evocative and sensuous', suggesting an affective dimension of film taste, a dimension that I discuss further below. This also seems to be reflected in Rama's assessment of sex and violence in contemporary films:

Rama (interview): The way they used to do it, it was romantic, isn't it? When you see the *Casablanca* those two men they love the woman, they're honouring the woman, yeah? And now when you see it they're just getting naked or the two...the man loves the woman and they're fighting over it. Ha! They're killing each other or they plot to kill. So, you know, the whole nature of the thing is changed. I can do the science fiction bit but I can't do this fiction bit about human behaviours and what they do, especially this new movie, they've got to sell it with lots of violence and sex.

For Rama, the lack of subtlety lessens the resonance of the diegesis and disrupts her suspension of disbelief. It disturbs, if you will, the surrogate body as it draws affectual awareness back to the material space of the cinema (Voss, 2011).

The final, overriding, element of shared taste is of a different kind. It moves beyond content to genre. There was an almost universal love of musicals expressed by participants:

Joyce (interview): But musical films are my favourite. When I was a kid films like *Gigi* and *The Sound of Music*

Maria (interview): Any Busby Berkley film, and Esther Williams. But, musicals, as I say, I love them I really do.

Joanne (interview): [my favourites are] Anything, *anything*, with singing and dancing

Mavis (go-along, before *Julie and Julia*): I love musicals, any kind of musical, jazz musical I like, classical musical I like, I just like them.

It would be easy to assume that such clearly expressed tastes might determine what films participants chose to watch at the Clapham Picturehouse, or whether or not they attended that month's Rio matinee. But, as the previous discussion suggests it might, the importance of attending often overrode such concerns and the majority of women would go regardless of what film was showing. While this was not quite equal across cinemas – participants attending Clapham Picturehouse had a choice of five films while the Rio audience was only offered one – if none of the films particularly appealed, participants from the Picturehouse

would still go and watch what they considered the best option.²⁷ Within Bourdieu's (1984) work, of course, stated likes and dislikes are not the sum of taste. Rather, taste is understood to be pre-reflexive, a bodily *sense* of enjoying something, or not, a sense that is generated through habitus. That participants would attend regardless of what was playing resulted in us often watching films together that contained content that went against their stated taste and gave me the opportunity to observe the ways in which it appears to manifest in bodily responses. Such responses, I will argue, speak to the significance of the affective dimension of habitus at the cinema, and to the collective – differentiating – nature of affect (Tolia-Kelly, 2006).

Some of the bodily responses I observed were very expressive and almost certainly consciously performed. For example, as I watched *Alice in Wonderland 3D* with Theresa, she exaggerated the impact of the 3D effects by ducking to dodge objects that appeared to be coming out of the screen. But at other times bodily responses were subtle and seemed to be triggered by a connection of film and participant that hit at a deeper, pre-reflexive level. This doesn't have to imply a deep emotional connection, rather moments where the habitus and film collide to co-produce pre-reflexive responses, such as Janet's tears described above or, at the other end of the spectrum, Joan and Diane's laughter during *Four Lions*. Although these responses were later reflected on by these women – 'it made me cry', 'it's a moving film' (Janet), 'that film made me laugh, it was a right send up' (Joan) – as Sobchack (2000) explains, such reflection comes after, is a result of, the almost simultaneous pre-reflexive bodily response.

²⁷ Although Janet R and Ann, who attended the Rio and Clapham Picturehouse respectively, offer exceptions to this over arching trend.

There are other examples in my observations, too, that did not so clearly relate to emotion as such:

Joyce (go-along, *Up in the Air*): *At the end of the sex scene Joyce lets out a big sigh and begins to pick at her hands and twiddle her foot.*

Ethel (go-along, *The Red Shoes*): *Almost before the moment of impact [of Victoria Page after she jumps, or falls, from her balcony], Ethel's entire body stiffened and her head pushed back into the chair. As she relaxed, she kissed her teeth and muttered 'Why did she have to kill herself?'*

Joanne (go-along, *Nine*): *Penelope Cruz seems to be doing a lap dance for the entire cinema, Joanne seems unfazed but the loud cinema has been silenced in what feels like a collective grimace.*

Norma (go-along, *Salt*): *She sits with her bag on her lap and taps her hand on it throughout – rarely sits still, moving her hands and crossing and uncrossing her legs. It's sort of too much action and she starts to yawn when a man shoots knives out of his feet and Norma jumps to cover her face, as if trying to catch up with the action on screen.*

Pat (go-along, *The Secrets in their Eyes*): *There's a point at which it switches, and we are suddenly ensconced in the unravelling of a violent murder of a young woman. Pat's laughter hangs in the air and she begins to wring her hands and fiddle with her rings. Her coffee is set down. She looks distressed, Pat groans.*

In her exploration of mother and baby screenings, Boyle (2010) noted a similar bodily reaction to the films being shown. In her case, the women seemed to

instinctively cover their baby's eyes whenever vividly violent content appeared. In interviews, all participants said that they knew the violence wouldn't have an effect on their baby, but that they nevertheless *felt* uncomfortable. Boyle concluded that, 'films that provoke particular anxieties over their roles as and responsibilities as mums could be uncomfortable, *not* because the women were genuinely fearful for their babies..., but, rather because viewing 'unsuitable' films and, in particular, doing so *in public*, could not be easily reconciled with their aspirations as mothers' (2010: 287).

This analysis might seem at odds with Boyle's (2010) claim that such a response was instinctive. Through Bourdieu (1977, 1990a), however, we can see that such instinct might stem from habitus, an incorporation of social norms into the body. The affected body is triggered into action before there's time to consciously process that 'the image is violent but it doesn't matter because it won't affect them'. Instead it is habitus responding, a bodily expression of an inculcated sense of what is appropriate or inappropriate behaviour that co-constitutes the affectual habitus and impacts upon how we *feel* particular images (and cultural practices). I believe that, while there are different cultural connotations and judgements at stake to those of the women interviewed by Boyle, the subtle embodied responses shown by the women I attended the cinema with can be seen in a similar way – as a public (pre-reflexive) dissociation, or association, with particular content and tastes. And while there were, of course, important exceptions to the generalised tastes suggested above,²⁸ I think that the similarities point to something about

²⁸ For example, Jenny, who stated a sincere dislike for horror, which could seem to correspond to the shared rejection of violence on screen also claims Quentin Tarantino as one of her favourite directors ('anything Tarantino does, we will go and watch'). His films are famously full of what one might term senseless violence. Similarly, while no one explicitly expressed a liking for sex on screen, as we watched a particularly intense raw scene in *I Am Love* (Guadagnino, 2009) Wendy turned to me with raised eyebrows and what can only be described as a cheeky grin. This was

practice that takes us back to the above discussion of the somatic norm. It supports my suggestion in this chapter that cinema here co-constitutes a mode of generation, attenuating differences among the audience and enacting a fluid but enduring collective identity.

With birth years varying from 1926 to 1950, and from a variety of backgrounds, the content of the films participants' viewed at the cinema across the life course will have varied significantly but they would nevertheless have shared a relative lack of explicit content in terms of sex and violence. The Hays, or Production, code which censored the 'moral' content of American-produced films was fully adopted in 1934, and only began to loosen its tight grip after 1952, at which point elongated kissing was still subject to controversy (Couvares, 2006: 4–9). While European films famously offered more sexually explicit imagery, the trajectory of British film censorship mirrored that of America and also began to relax in the mid-1950s (Richards, 1997). There are important exceptions to this, not least the surprisingly violent and incredibly popular *Scarface* (1932), and the sexually explicit *Last Tango in Paris* (1972), which gained mainstream release after its Oscar nomination. But the majority of mainstream films remained visually conservative with violent and sexual content controversial until well into the late 1970s, as Pam shows through her remembered reaction to the arrival of British 'kitchen sink' dramas in the 1960s:

'We all thought they [kitchen sink dramas] were amazing. They had sex in them, we'd never seen that before. Especially *L Shaped Room*, that was

followed after the film with a very positive assessment of the film's erotic depiction of sex from her and her friend Sheila.

like we recognised ourselves on the screen. You know, there were people living in bedsits like in real life'

This content would also have been common to the films viewed by those participants not born in England, as the American film industry dominates across the world, even in places with strong local film cultures (Miller, 2000: 145). As such, although they grew up in different places, one experience shared by participants would have been the films on offer at the cinema. Laurice and Mavis referenced this shared cinematic history during our go-along, as they bemoaned the assumption of 'difference' between their cinema experiences and those in Britain:

Laurice: the fashion, they go and come, go and come. And you see some of these films, we saw them already at home, even in Jamaica where we come from, we saw them at the cinema. Out there as well!

Me: Do you like to see them again?

Mavis: I don't mind, I don't mind, that's what I am saying I don't really care about it – but the older ones we seen at home are nice, the older films are nice...

While this continuity between viewed content perhaps implies that films play a socialisation role for cinemagoers, developing particular expectations and accepted behaviour, if we read it through Bourdieu's (1977; 1990a) work, we can see that cinematic norms become incorporated into the habitus so they are absorbed into the body. In this way the somatic norm relates not just to

appearance and behaviour, but also – through associated dispositions – to affect and sensation.

It seems to me, then, that the responses to films described above can be understood as the knowing body's rejection of acts on screen that *feel* inappropriate in public. As an embodied subjective incorporation of objective structures, cultural capital co-constitutes our affective habitus (Probyn, 2004). As such, it feeds into how we engage film meaning and therefore positions us in particular (collective) ways in relation to the co-constituted representation. In this way we can begin to recognise that what are often understood as conscious 'resistant' readings are not, they are co-constituted by affective habitus resulting in a difference in the moment that film becomes cinema. I think that this generates a way of thinking through cultural (habitual) sensoria that enables an expansion of Marks' (2000) term outlined in Chapter Two and suggests its significance for understanding all cinema practice. The film becomes not an entity with pre-existing meaning that either is or is not resonant, but is instead understood as containing meaning that is co-constituted by affective habitus. This is, in part, constituted by cultural capital developed across life, an idea I build on in the next chapter to argue that it generates a cinematic habitus. Therefore we can begin to see how the embodied generational difference described above has a very real impact on cinema as practice.

Taste is fundamental to Bourdieu's (1984) understanding of distinction, and cultural capital is commonly understood as key to his understanding. This capital becomes the means through which certain tastes are legitimated and others deemed illegitimate, thus reinforcing status within society. However, of equal interest to Bourdieu (1984) in his study of taste is the ways in which such capitals

are developed and maintained across life – the development of the habitus (Lizardo, 2011: 2). Here I hope to have shown that the taste shared by the women in the cinema – stemming from a shared dimension of habitus – contributes to the ‘riskless risk’ found by Hubbard (2002; 2003a) to be so important to the pleasure of cinema-going. Here it offers a form of sociability, *mostly* spoken in silence through sensing, reacting bodies as they watch the films. It asserts, maintains, a dimension of habitus – a mode of generation – through cinema. In this way, these bodily expressions of taste reinforced the importance of cinema as a public event to participants at both cinemas, as such pre-reflexive expressions of taste *en masse* practically emphasise the commonalities between a diverse group. The ‘riskless risk’ described by Hubbard is generated in spite of differences that may be emphasised in other fields. However, as both Bourdieu (1984; 1977) and Hubbard (2002; 2003a) point out, in generating the sense of sameness and practically emphasising the shared dimensions of habitus, there is always an exclusionary ‘difference’ simultaneously constituted. Here, though, the distinction of taste may come down more to physical and symbolic rather than cultural capital. The distinction being asserted does not seem to be against those with different tastes in film, but with different ‘tastes’ in practice – or at least different abilities to engage in cinema as practice. It is against those who ‘don’t make it out’. Those stuck at home. It is against the ‘Fourth Age’.

4. Conclusion: generational habitus and the practical negation of the Fourth Age at the cinema.

My key concern in this chapter was to explore the question ‘how might differentiated bodies practise the cinema differently?’ As shown, across research and data analysis, two significant ‘types’ of difference emerged: that between

audiences at and between the two cinemas, and their corresponding social cinema scenes; and an overwhelming affinity between participants' embodiments which generated a sense of difference to my own. In outlining both, I hope to have shown that such a question cannot be dealt with in linear terms. Rather, adopting Bourdieu's (1990a, 1984, 1977) theory and its associated commitment to in situ empirical work, it becomes clear that multiple levels of difference and sameness co-exist and are drawn out or attenuated depending on the field of practice.

The maintenance of habitus across the life course generates shifting age categories that determine at which age we are considered 'old' – both biologically and socially. Featherstone and Hepworth (1986) have argued that the growth of the Third Age (and its emphasis on consumer freedom) has produced a 'trend towards increased age-denial' (Blaikie 1999: 174). Blaikie (1999) links this to the growth of the anti-ageing industry and a corresponding lifestyle expectation where members of the Third Age are expected to stay active to stay young. In this way, an aged somatic norm is generated that is co-constituted by the generational habitus. This, I think, relates to the 'practical use' (Bourdieu, 1977) of cinema for participants. As domestic viewing set-ups become increasingly cinema-like, offering a cheaper and, arguably, more comfortable film-viewing experience, one could assume that the 'use' of cinema-going is becoming less clear (Allen, 2011). To me, however, read through Blaikie (1999), it implies that cinema-going offers something to participants in excess of what these domestic viewing practices might. It emphasises the importance of the public nature of going to the cinema and, with it, the practical compliance to 'active ageing' (Boyle, 2010; Stewart, 2003; Hubbard, 2002; Hansen, 1991).

While cinema is, of course, not the only public practice engaged by participants, it is distinct among them, as the cultural consumption involved offers an engagement with society on a material and symbolic level – enabling not just the maintenance but also the strengthening of cultural and physical capital. In contrast to domestic viewing I would suggest that cinema as practice offers a habitual maintenance of independence and responsibility, and a pre-reflexive assimilation to the aged somatic norm associated with this mode of generation – co-constituting a sense of solidarity among the audiences. Going to the cinema and enacting a mode of generation, then, can be seen as a practical negation of earlier ways of practising later life, of previous modes of generation, and emphasising membership of a new identity – that of the ‘young-old’. Unfortunately it seems that, like much of the ‘positive’ representations of active ageing, this serves to further negate those in the Fourth Age – who not only represent an earlier form of practising ageing, but also are unable to achieve the contemporary somatic norm of later life encouraged by narratives and representations of active ageing (Katz and Marshall, 2003; Hugman, 1999). In this sense it presents a form of symbolic violence – a form of domination that Bourdieu defines as ‘exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity’ (1992: 167).

In an attempt at confronting the question to which the findings discussed in this chapter talk in a way that has implications for cinema as practice beyond the audience with whom I conducted research, I would like to suggest that the discussions above imply that differentiated bodies don’t practice cinema differently in a way that can be mapped and predicted. Instead, such differentiation is emergent *through* practice. The discussion of taste proposes that this is in part produced through the affective dimension of habitus and the ways in which it

engage the film on the screen, and visa versa. This assertion begins to suggest some of the findings that emerged from my exploration of the question 'how is representation experienced in practice?' I shall continue these discussions in the following chapter by exploring the themes drawn out in data analysis that spoke to this question more directly. In doing so, I engage further with the pattern of cinema-going across the life course and its impact upon the constitution of film meaning in the moment of viewing. In this way, I attempt to carry these discussions of difference through to an understanding of representation that recognises the fluidity in the meaning made in the moment, as film becomes cinema through the (differentiated) viewing body.

Chapter Six. The temporalities of practice: Film, memories, and developing the cinematic habitus

‘My whole effort is to discover history where it is best hidden, in people’s heads and in the posture of their bodies.’

Bourdieu, 1990b: 46

A concern with the body, with space and with film runs through this thesis.

Although inseparably intertwined at the cinema, each one became a protagonist in the key findings from my empirical work, acting as the point of access for the issues. If the previous chapter was shaped by concerns with the body, this one takes as its starting point the film itself. The following discussion builds on the ideas raised in my engagement with taste, difference and affective habitus to consider how, once comfortably in their seats, socially positioned bodies interact with the film on the screen. As such, this chapter attends to the question ‘how is cinematic representation experienced in practice?’ but it also – since the film itself distinguishes cinema from other cultural practices – contributes to the conversation begun in the previous chapter about thinking through how differentiated bodies might practise the cinema differently. With its implication of a concern with subjectivities, the use of the word ‘experience’ here may seem out of tune with Bourdieu’s theory. However, for him ‘[t]here exists a correspondence between social structures and mental structures, between the objective dimensions of the social world... and the principles of vision and division that agents apply to it’, so that nothing is ever entirely subjective or objective (1989a: 7, quoted in Wacquant, 1992: 12).

Despite making it clear to my participants that I was interested in their contemporary cinema practice, memories of cinema-going and of films featured often in our conversations. As such, during data analysis I found that memory emerged as a significant theme. As I began to explore it, memory became increasingly relevant to my understanding of representation in practice, an understanding that emphasised the temporalities of practice outlined in Chapter Three. The recurrence of these memories in my data encouraged me to join the growing literature exploring the relationship between memory and film, and offer a contribution by way of considering memory *at the cinema* (McIver, 2009; Stubbings, 2003; Kuhn, 2002). It arose with the emergence of three key themes that I consider in this chapter: memories and patterns of cinema-going across the life course; memories of film and embodied knowledge and; lived biographies at the cinema.

Thinking memory through Bourdieu, however, has particular implications. Most important, perhaps, is that while memory is often experienced and understood as subjective, Bourdieu's theory of practice considers it also inseparably intertwined with objective structures, through the habitus. What is more, the concept of memory might be better understood through Bourdieu as a form of embodied knowledge. As with all embodied knowledge, such memories offer pre-reflexive guidance in practice. These embodied memories – through habitus – shape perception, and in doing so, position us in social space — albeit in fluid and relational ways as discussed in the previous chapter. This does not mean that they are not personal memories, more that the personal memories reflect not just subjectivities but the objective structures in which they were developed and those in which they are told (see also Kuhn, 2002, on cinema-memory). I hope to show

through the following discussion that by acknowledging memories *at* the cinema, not just *of* the cinema, we begin to see the ways in which our multi-dimensional habitus works to co-constitute film as it becomes cinema, offering a way of engaging Marks' (2000) evocative understanding of cultural sensoria outside of intercultural cinema to explore the ways in which it might be understood as at play in all film viewing.

Beginning with a discussion of the recurring themes within the women's memories of cinema-going, I show that much of what they recalled chimes with memories offered by participants in Annette Kuhn's (2002) exemplary oral history of cinema-going in the 1930s. But, due to my interest in contemporary cinema-going practices, they lead me to a discussion of the ways in which these memories, or past practices, shape our cinema-going across life. Of course, as we go to the cinema we also watch films, and memories of films themselves featured in many of our conversations, often drawn upon to discuss the film we had just seen together. Through Bourdieu, I understand these memories as embodied products of the habitus, which he describes as 'the product of all biographical experience (so that, just as no two individual histories are identical, so no two individual habitus are identical, although there are classes of experiences and therefore classes of habitus – the habitus of classes)' – a description that allows our position in social space to remain in part ambiguous until it is relationally enacted in with fields (1993: 46). Finally, I move on to discuss a broader memory-type not directly related to film or cinema but which I nevertheless found significant to cinema as practice and to the co-constitution of film viewed – that of our wider biography.

My aim, then, is to consider how such embodied memories – understood as embodied knowledge – impact upon representation in practice. Doing so inevitably

leads to a consideration of how differentiated bodies practice cinema differently as it provokes questions around how we practically co-constitute the film in the moment of viewing – in practical time. In this way, the discussions here build on those in the previous chapter. Although this conversation leads me to draw significantly on talk, when understood in relation to my observations it hints at a broader importance for embodied knowledge at the cinema. Let me begin, then, with the casual oral histories gathered through conversations with participants.

1. Cinema-going throughout life.

As suggested above, recollections of past cinema-going featured heavily in our interviews and go-alongs. Some participants spent their adolescence or childhood in the ‘golden age’ of cinema with very different practices to those we have today. As I suggested in the previous chapter, this was the period when cinema-going peaked, with 80% of the UK’s population attending at least once in 1946 (Hicks and Allen, 1999: 26). This was also a period of habitual cinema-going for younger audiences, here epitomised by Joanne and Jenny’s memories.²⁹

Joanne (interview): In the 1930s, that was a heyday for us – two films on a Sunday, there was a change – there was Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday another film, Thursday, Friday, Saturday you got a change of programme. As well as the film, you saw a newsreel, a second film feature, you stood up at the end and it was continuous performance.

²⁹ These memories actually bracket the peak period of the 1940s, with Joanne’s coming from the lead-up to it, and Jenny’s coming from the period of decline in the mid 1950s. Nevertheless, cinema-going in the 1930s was already high and in the 1950s it remained a widely partaken practice, with numbers falling significantly from 1,101 million in the mid-50s to under half that in 1960 (Docherty et al., 1987).

Jenny (go-along, before *Sherlock Holmes*): then we moved to one of the brand spanking new housing estates in London and the bottom of our hill was the Regal Cinema and we used to do Saturday morning pictures regularly and mum and dad would take us to see all the big epics, you know, *Sound of Music*, well *Sound of Music*'s much later but *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, *The King and I*, all of the musicals we used to go to and Saturday morning pictures every week so I grew up going to the cinema at least once a week, probably twice a week.

While both of these memories suggest that cinema-going was a common and accessible practice, far more of the participants remember their early cinema-going as a thing of contention and struggle. For some this was a matter of money, the 'nickel' or 'penny' required still too much to come by:

Lauretta (interview): Oh I used to love it! But getting that money to go to the movies, which is what we call it, was extremely difficult. I mean we would sell at the, you know, or collect bottles and take them to the store for the return money, you know, that you got. We were a family of six, we didn't have any money, um, so my mother they both, both my parents worked. Um they couldn't afford to give us money to go to the movies and if they did you know it was a big, big, treat that you couldn't get that money to go. But we did go, we somehow did go.

Jean (go-along, before *Good Hair*): I mean you have to remember that in the 1950s, you know... people didn't go, it was expensive.

Or, sometimes, it was a practice deemed inappropriate for a girl:

Pam (interview): You didn't go. I wasn't allowed to go to Saturday morning pictures, don't know but I wasn't allowed to go... I think my mother thought it was common, I think, you know, that a rough crowd went. I suspect she thought that more boys than girls, which it probably was. And they used to throw things down from the balcony and, you know, none of my friends, none of my girlfriends went so I suppose...

Others remember having to earn their trip to the cinema:

Susan (interview): I remember that you had to ask the parents and they said "oh yes you can go but you know your duty". You have to either go and get some water, you have to go and feed pigs or whatever but they make sure you have to do something before you go... You have your, you have to go with big people before they allow you to go on your own, parents was so strict.

Whether earned, fought for, or easily accessible, one refrain runs through all of the reminiscences offered by these women — that going to the cinema was a real treat, something they relished doing:

Theresa (go-along, before *Alice in Wonderland 3D*): I can remember vividly my father taking me as a treat with some other children to the Granada in Maidstone to see the first *Alice*. Imagine that ... I remember him carrying me because I'd trodden on a nail and couldn't walk. And I was in slippers.

Maria (go-along, interval of *Calamity Jane*): Three cinemas along the Angel High Street and my Dad when he was home on leave or anything, it was just after the war maybe, and he'd come home and it would be the big treat

that he used to take us to those, there were the three cinemas there – The Angel, The Empire and The Bluehall.

Although most are from a later period, these memories very much reflect those recorded by Kuhn (2002) in her detailed oral history of cinema-going in the 1930s. Taken together, they generate a picture of cinema-going practice very different to that found in 2010. I have shown that such apparent epochs of cinema-going are found across the decades and have been well documented by film historians, with practices often changing simultaneous to exhibition sites and film form – each one constituted by the other (Maltby et al, 2007; Gomery, 1992). But these statements are not just small contributions to a growing oral history of cinema-going. I think they also hint at the ways in which the women I went to the cinema with had already, at a young age, been positioned differently in relation to the practice. Their subjective experiences had been limited by – for example – not having enough money, gendered and classed expectations about ‘appropriate’ behaviour and particular familial relationships. These personal memories, then, while subjectively experienced, speak of particular positions within social space and suggest inculcated collective relationships to the cinema, within limiting structures.

Jancovich (2011: 89) points out that the temporalities of cinema-going are multiple. Alongside historical time (understood through modes of spectatorship and exhibition practices), he suggests, is the more personal trajectory of generational time. In the previous chapter I showed the importance of this to the distinct mode of generation I found emergent at the cinema across my research. For most, cinema is of course not a new practice engaged for the first time in retirement. As discussed, it can help enact a mode of generation precisely because of a shared history of cinema. Indeed, when I came to analysing the data I found that there

were a surprising number of crossovers in personal narratives regarding the significance of cinema across the life course. This suggests perhaps that an emergent collective identity is always part of the practical logic of cinema, albeit for different purposes at different stages of life or different cinema events. For example, one oft-repeated and therefore seemingly significant stage of cinema-going reported by participants was in formative years of dating:

Pat (interview): I can remember going to see *West Side Story* on a date. Um, things like that. Usually it was big films, you know you went on. I don't know whether I sort of used to say 'well if I'm going to go out, I'm going to see something I can't afford to go to myself'. Ha ha. It was quite calculated really, 'ooh well I'd like to see *West Side Story* but it's only on in the West End', you know.

Joanne (interview): before this in the thirties I used to go regular – blokes used to take you to the cinema. They always wanted to sit in the backseat but I wasn't having any of that.

Theresa (interview): The big musicals [*Carousel*] was sort of my favourite, because that was where I had my first kiss from a boyfriend. So I was about 18... And *Oklahoma*. I was with another village boy.

More enduringly, for many it had formed an important part of the development of significant relationships later on:

Wendy (go-along, after *I Am Love*): My first husband...got tremendously interested in movies. And when, we'd go on a Monday, so we were always going to the movies... So that was a big part of our free time.

For quite a few participants at the Clapham Picturehouse particularly, this meant a sharing and development of cultural capital in their early years of courting, a sharing that became an important part of their on-going relationship. Jenny and Pam show this well:

Jenny (interview): I mean Frank [her now husband] was an art student and he used to run the film society at Camberwell so he used to choose the films and he'd been to see a lot more films than I ever had. I just used to go and see what was on that week at the Regal but he'd go up into Soho and pick up films to show to the film club at college so he'd seen, you know, all the Polanski films, he'd seen foreign language films and more, more sort of, erm, not rare but difficult films that weren't on the general circuit but then I'd seen all the musicals he'd never seen any of them, they weren't his bag. Not the sort of thing he wanted to show the students at Camberwell. I suppose film was one of the things that brought us together.

Pam had a similar experience and for her cinema-going had also been a way of getting to know London:

Pam (interview): When I met my husband, I mean he was a great Hitchcock fan, so we used to go and see his things wherever they were on, you know, I can remember trekking over to Dalston [most likely to the Rio!] and places like that because he'd heard they had something on at this cinema, you know things like that. I went to see all of those.

As careers became increasingly demanding and many participants had children, there was a corresponding reduction in cinema-going, with most only engaging with cinema as parents dropping their children off on a Saturday morning:

Giuseppina (go-along, before *An Education*): You couldn't do it now but I didn't think about it. I used to leave my children here for Saturday pictures. They went to see John Travolta, you know all the time he's in the films for the children. They went to the one in Holloway, one in Finsbury Park, that's gone now, and Wood Green was one as well.

Pat (go-along, after *The Secret in Their Eyes*): At that stage [when she stopped going to the cinema] they used to go because there was always a Saturday morning children's programme, I don't think they still do it. You know a children's programme Saturday morning. So they would go, yes, um I don't know what, I mean it was cowboy movies that type of stuff and all three of them did that.

Ethel (interview): Everybody used to go to the matinee on the Saturday afternoon, Sunday, at nights, but I never come to watch any [film] play. Not this one. I send the kids. Having the husband, I've got to wash, iron, things like that. I just stay at home.

Taken together, these quotes suggest that practices of cinema-going, and our relationship to them, change not just across the life course but also across historical time. As the cinema-going habits of these women shifted during their life course other wider changes were occurring: cinema-going and its place in the social calendar changed significantly, as did the position of women in society and, indeed, that of older people.³⁰ The two, it seems, are intertwined – historical

³⁰ The universal state pension came into effect in 1948, as part of the implementation of the 1946 National Insurance Act. The formalisation of retirement that this legislation brought is widely understood to have contributed to the social construction of older people as an economic burden (Green et al., 2009; Gilleard and Higgs, 2000; Laws, 1996).

changes do not happen in the abstract but are instead lived and constitutive of habitus.

These quotes offer descriptions of and insight into the shared shifting significance of cinema-going practices across the life course, a shared trajectory that reinforced my analysis that a distinct mode of generation was being co-constituted with cinema as practice. But they also suggest something else of more relevance to the question being attended to here. Because my research design led me to go to the cinema with participants it was here that many of their memories were shared with me. Rather than view these reminiscences as separate to contemporary practice, I began during my analysis to see them as integral to understanding the women's cinema-going in the present, just as my own were for me. Understood through Bourdieu, these memories come to suggest the implicit learning of the developing habitus and, as well as cognitive recall, we can see that there is a bodily counterpart. These remembered activities were not just taken in through the rational mind, but the movement and positionings that went with the more habitual practices, such as going to the cinema, are also inculcated into the body. In this way, the body at the cinema is a particular, socially shaped one. It's shaped by our past practices and subjective experience, but never separate from 'objective' social structures that co-constitute our position in social space and emergent identities. These practices produce embodied knowledges that then pre-reflexively inform practice in the present and place limits on the collective identities that we can be a part of. This, I hope, begins to hint at the importance of the (positioned) body to the way that representation is experienced in practice.

Having received little attention in the academic literature, the sociability of cinema and memories of cinema-going have more recently been drawn out in oral

histories (Kuhn, 2002, 2011; McIver, 2009; Puwar, 2007). Film memories came out just as strongly in my research, which was not aimed at collecting them, and enhanced the distinct temporalities of practice. This means memories can help us to explore the ideas being raised here further. Indeed, I hope to show that their prominence in post-film discussions suggests something about the associations we make as we watch films. These associations position us in relation to the representations on the screen, but that also differently constitute the film in relation to us. To help me build this argument, the next section offers a discussion of the ways in which I found memories – as embodied knowledge – important at the cinema.

2. Memories of films as embodied knowledge.

Having established some of the shared patterns of cinema-going across the life course, and suggested that they impact upon our practice in the present, I use this section to consider the ways in which embodied memories of the films seen impact upon our practical engagement with cinematic representations. Although most of my go-alongs were to films that neither the participant nor I had seen before, the trip to go and see *Calamity Jane* (1953) with 76-year-old Maria was different. Before the film started, she explained that she vaguely remembered having seen it at the cinema when it first came out:

Maria: I did see it. I can't tell you how many years ago. But it must have been about '40 when it first came out. Any idea when that was?

Me: I think it was - it must have been 50s actually, late 50s?

Maria: 60, 70, 80, 90, 100. Yeah, 40 or 50 years ago. So I know there's a lot

of singing, a lot of dancing. Don't know what else...

This is a misremembering of the film – or a misplaced assumption about the film – because although it is a musical there is actually very little dancing; and Maria's memory was not too clear. However, as the film wore on, I could almost see the memory rising up within her.

It was pouring with rain that day and Maria had been a little tetchy on arrival at the cinema, not as warm towards me as she had been in our interview. Her left foot was in plaster so movement was quite restricted and because she has no direct public transport to the cinema, she had had to walk. I was aware that this would have been difficult for her so I apologised as soon as she arrived to meet me and she replied sharply, 'I thought I might as well get it over with'. This air of annoyance remained with Maria and she angrily went without her usual tea and cake, seemingly trying to make a point of forgoing any pleasure for the duration of the trip. However, as the film started, Maria perceptibly relaxed. Her body, which had been stiff and tense, fell back into the chair and then, gradually, she began to sway to the music, eventually – apparently unable to help herself – singing along to the opening lines of 'The Black Hills of Dakota', and later joining in more loudly with the big hit 'Secret Love'. As the film finished in a musical climax, Maria turned to me grinning broadly, clearly elated, the sparkles in her eyes revealing a complete transformation in mood. In our chat after the film, she calmly reflected on this. First through her enjoyment of earlier narrative forms, a description in which her clearly affected body was left out:

Maria: It's the predictability of every step of the way. Because those films were like that, you could predict... Now anything like that would be, you

know, funny endings and not very pleasant endings and things like that. In those days they were predictable and you just knew what to expect just to come next. I suppose that was then, everything was predictable then wasn't it?

But when she came to explaining her feelings on hearing the songs, the sensing body re-emerges briefly:

Maria: It was good. It was making me cry. You know, "oh that's lovely", and I welled up. There were a couple of songs, and the music was there as well on a couple of them, and as soon as you heard the introduction, you just remembered the song. There were a couple of them in there. I think they must have been the most famous one because the others [*can't hear*], all the funny ones. But the ones obviously, they must have been a hit at the time because they've stayed and I think that there were others singing to those two particular songs.

Me: Why do you think that made you cry?

Maria: It's just an emotion that hits you, an emotion yeah. I'm quite an emotional person probably... And remembering the song and remembering the words, thinking, "aahh".

The combination of my earlier observation of Maria as she watched *Calamity Jane* and our conversation after the film enabled me to consider the connection between her conscious, reflexive, memories and a dimension of memories that appeared to be embodied, experienced pre-reflexively. It seemed that Maria's memories of the film impacted significantly on her film experience. Her comment that 'everything

was more predictable then, wasn't it?' implies that the memories of the film took her back to the time when she would have first seen it. The bodily response I observed further suggested that embodied rememberings of films seen impact upon sensations of viewing in the present and, possibly, the representation. These memories are gained across life and incorporated into (as well as engaged through) habitus; they are absorbed into the body. As such, understood through Bourdieu the subjective experiences they represent are intertwined with the objective structures with which they were co-constituted. On a very basic level, broader social structures influence films made and where they are distributed; and cultural capital may guide those we chose to watch although, as I have argued, there is a generational dimension to this (Bourdieu, 1984). When memory is triggered by film it is affecting and we sense the past as we *make sense* of the film – it is a knowledgeable body that acts as surrogate for the film, not an empty vessel of unmediated sensation (Voss, 2011).

Jones (2001) offers an evocative exploration of this layering by exploring cinema memory at matinees of 'classic' films shown in a 'period' cinema in Tampa, Florida. While watching *Casablanca* (1942) there she looked around the theatre and noticed that many members of the audience were old enough to have been to see the film at the cinema on its first release. Herself attending the theatre to watch this film as an act of nostalgia for a time she can't remember, she thought about how different the experience must have been for the older audience members with personal memories of the time. Importantly, she begins to analyse this as a double vision – she argues that when we watch old films at the cinema that we saw on their first release, what we are actually doing is watching our past selves watching the film for the first time. 'It is likely that they remember the

experience of seeing the film when it first was shown in the 1940s and, more important, they see their past selves seeing it ... They are able to see, when they watch *Casablanca* today, the gaze of themselves seeing the movie in 1942' (Jones, 2001: 382).

To extend the analysis of these 'cinema ghosts', Jones (2001) went to see one of her own formative films – *Saturday Night Fever* (1977) – and noted a similar effect. Interestingly, although she initially felt consumed by memories of her 16-year-old self, and the memories that all of the props sparked off, she also found that she had an emotional response to the film itself. Jones argues this suggests, 'that watching *Saturday Night Fever* is divided between the film's narrative and my own personal narrative' (2001: 285). This layering effect that is, according to Jones (2001), experienced as we watch films that we saw on first release, certainly seems to chime with Maria's viewing of *Calamity Jane*. However, I think that Maria's response to *Calamity Jane* can contribute to Jones' (2001) understanding of the way that memory works at the cinema. It seemed that Maria's emotional response was in fact triggered by, rather than existing in spite of, her memories. This is not just about the cognitive memories, but also those correspondingly in the body. Because these knowledges are inculcated through experiences, they at once position us and show themselves as natural. The emotional response that Jones (2001) here puts down to an inevitable reaction to the film's narrative may well instead be drawn from an interaction between her socially produced sensing body and the film. This means that which feels entirely subjective (the memory) and that which feels objective (an expected emotional response written into the film's narrative) are, in fact, one and the same – interacting to further (re)produce habitus.

Key to the understanding I am developing here is Bourdieu's suggestion that:

'The habitus is the principle of a *selective perception* of the indices tending to confirm and reinforce it rather than transform it ... it adjusts itself to a probable future which it anticipates and helps to bring about because it reads it directly in the present of the presumed world, *the only one it can ever know*' (1990a: 64).

Although here Bourdieu is talking about perceptions of the social world, thinking through the sense of this framework implies that the meaning garnered from a film does not pre-exist the engagement of our habitus with the film-field. This is the process through which it becomes cinema, and responses that seem to be related to something inherent within the film are also the result, in part, of something that is inherent to us – the habitus.

Indeed, we can perhaps extend the significance of Jones' (2001) insights beyond an understanding of the particular film experiences she describes. Initially, at least, it seems clear that a similar response could be conjured by watching a film seen before, not just those seen on first release. While watching *Calamity Jane* I noted my own familiarity with the film and experienced a similar layering to that described by Jones (2001):

I am unexpectedly reminded very strongly of my Dad's house – Manda and Dad's joint love of Doris. And as I watch these opening scenes I simultaneously watch the opening scenes of all of her other films that we used to watch on Sundays, especially Move Over Darling [a Doris Day film from 1963]. I am at once in their living room, eating tomatoes and sweetcorn with balsamic vinegar, waiting to go back to Mum's, and in the

Rio with Maria. Neither is more or less real to me, I am simultaneously in both, and yet both are experienced differently because of their engagement [with one another?]. Doris feels like a long lost friend.

These different embodied memories (accessed cognitively and sensorially) are experienced subjectively, but they were inculcated within, and reproduce objective structures. I have shown the ways in which such structures position Maria and me as separate modes of generation, but dependent on the film-field, different multiple and overlapping dimensions of habitus will be brought to the fore for pre-reflexive interpretation, positioning us (albeit less perceptibly) as women, for example, and/or along the lines of social class. Bourdieu argues that our assessment of 'legitimate culture' is inculcated in early life through the family or educational practices, forming part of habitus. 'This transposable disposition', he suggests, 'inclines its owner towards other cultural experiences and enables him [sic] to *perceive, classify and memorise them differently*' (1984: 20, my italics). While Bourdieu (1984) is referring here to the ways in which our habitus shapes practice so that we generally seek out 'cultural experiences' appropriate to our position in social space (not because we consciously view them as such, but because they *feel* right), I would like to extend this here to suggest that habitus impacts upon how we *feel* and *make sense of* film. Indeed Voss, whose understanding of film's 'surrogate body' is outlined in Chapter Two, argues that a 'film, or any other aesthetic content, is not simply a random, formless object, and our reactions to it are not formless and random projections' (2011: 144). Instead reactions stem, in part, from gradually developed expectations of the medium and genre that comes into play as we watch films (Voss, 2011: 143). What appears to be a natural

response to a film text, then, is the product of (embodied) history, here understood through the habitus.

Our conversations across go-alongs, combined with my observations, suggested a similar overlaying of film-memory at play across all cinema. This may help to build on Jones' (2001) important insight to further develop an understanding of cinema as practice. In the following section, I explore some of the ways in which films seen – as well as where, who with and when – provide a form of intertextuality in practice as we simultaneously engage our affective embodied habitus, and the film on the screen, to constitute meaning in the moment of viewing.

2.1. Co-constituting meaning: films as pre-reflexive trace memories at the cinema.

Analysing my go-along transcripts and on-the-spot film analyses, I found that a layering of film memory may be present on a more subtle spectrum across most film viewing, as almost every post-film discussion was laced through with references to films previously viewed. While here I return to oral data, I do not want to lose sight of the embodied nature of memory. I want to argue here that, combined with observations, those films reflected on in conversations – and those not consciously remembered – contribute to the affective dimension of habitus and, therefore, the surrogate body we offer film and through which it becomes cinema (Voss, 2011).

Such is the power of the oscillation between the film being viewed and films previously viewed, that some directors make a feature of it – Quentin Tarantino being a notable example. Indeed, 62-year-old Jenny – with whom I went to see

Guy Ritchie's *Sherlock Holmes* – cited Tarantino as one of her favourite directors, and when we got out of the film remarked:

Lots and lots and lots of references to other stuff actually all the way through. Yeah I mean, Guy Ritchie obviously a very clever bloke. I like it when directors think their audiences are clever enough to know what they're talking about. I mean there were lots of literary references as well, you know, C Lewis and dark arts and stuff, you know.

While I missed the references Jenny refers to in *Sherlock Holmes*, the notes from my go-along with Joanne to see Rob Marshall's *Nine* show that my own oscillation between the film I was watching, films watched, where and with who as well as my thesis, had a significant impact on the film seen in the moment of viewing. *Nine* is a musical adaptation of Federico Fellini's film *8 ½* (1963). The note below shows my reaction to a scene in which two of the characters visit the Trevi Fountain, a landmark also featured in a highly iconic scene that forms the centrepiece of Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* (1960):

They sit at the Dolce Vita fountain and my viewing is simultaneous, I see them and I see Anita Eckberg in the water, taking me to Chris's [a former boyfriend with whom I first watched the film] sitting room, that horrible red sofa. I am also thinking about Joanne and writing these notes, thinking about my thesis and what it will end up being about. These things do not cancel each other out, I do not move in a linear way from one to the other, instead they are all in me at once – in sensation, in emotion, in imaginings and in visions – layered and each fragment enriching the other in the moment.

Here, again, we can see the layering identified by Jones (2001), but in more fleeting ways. Indeed, I remember having this feeling and trying to write it as quickly as I could in the dark, but the simultaneity of the experience was difficult to capture. In the quote below, Ann appears to also be referencing a layered effect upon watching Kurasawa's *The Seven Samurai* (1954). Here this was not because the director was referencing another film, but because of a later American interpretation:

Ann: Well I thoroughly enjoyed seeing it again. Um, I kept mentally comparing it with um...

Me: The *Magnificent Seven*?

Ann: Thank you. *The Magnificent Seven*. Yeah, which, er, is not a very good idea. I couldn't get it out of my head, it was like I was watching the two of them. Kept expecting what's his name to come on screen, the good looking one...

For Ann, as she says, this was a repeat viewing but rather than the embodied memories of the *Seven Samurai* she was more consciously overwhelmed by her more recent viewing of *Magnificent Seven*. Others were reminded of films even when the reference didn't appear to be purposeful on the part of the filmmakers:

Jenny (go-along, after *Sherlock Holmes*): I mean it sort of reminded me of *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, you know the first time I saw that one, you know the camaraderie between the two of them and also there was something about the way it was filmed, you know it was sort of super Technicolor, super real, super, super life size.

Although most often films would trigger memories of films, other media memories were also triggered. During the interval at *Julie and Julia* (2009), a film about American chef Julia Childs' formative cooking experiences in France as a young adult, and a woman in New York (Julie) who tries to cook all of the recipes from her first cookery book, Laurice and Mavis dived straight into a discussion of cookery programmes:

Laurice: It's like watching Saturday morning cooking. Yes, you can watch the recipes and do it, but do it *your way*. Some people try to do it just the same and it's good but better to do it your way

Mavis: When we cook a steak you know what they say? They say we murder it. Because that's how we know to cook it, we cook it well done

Laurice: This is another one, *Come Dine With Me*, you ever watch that? These people are so dirty, like the ones in this film here. You know when they get people in their house and the woman and man, they go nosing, do you know what they do? They give them less.

Mavis: I give her five, I give her three, I give her one because she bought me so and so.

These examples suggest an intertextuality between memory and film that appears to be prompted by all films, purposefully or not. They also, I think, show how accumulated (embodied) cultural capital impacts upon practices of viewing, influencing the shape of the film seen. These reflexive and pre-reflexive, bodily, associations appear to influence the shape of representation in the moment of viewing, enacting a particular film experience and contributing to this embodied

knowledge. This suggests – as I said earlier – that apparently personal responses to films through memory are also shaped by, and contribute to, the habitus. It is this point that I want to draw out further across this chapter and extend beyond memories of films to consider how wider habitus functions at the cinema, impacting upon representation in practice.

This relates to Marks' (2000) productive concept of cultural sensoria in which she argues that 'sense organs are the site where culture crosses the body' (2000: 199). For her, however, what is of interest is that these sensoria, 'can be translated into, and translate, cinematic languages' (2000: 206). As such, she is keen to explore the affinity, or not, between the cultural sensoria of the filmmaker with that of the spectator, arguing that certain films will resonate with certain cultures and not others and we cannot identify with sense memories that we have never had (200: 198). What I want to show here is that such sense memories are key to all film viewing, and are not only conjured when the image on the screen is designed to evoke particular culturally generated sensoria. To do this, it is important to first explore further the types of film memories that emerged in our conversations because I think that they can help think through their embodied counterparts.

We can see from Ann's quote about *The Magnificent Seven* that sometimes the memories of films triggered when watching a film are not completely clear – she can't remember the name of the film and refers to a man I assume to be Steve McQueen, who stars, as 'the good looking one...'. As I analysed my data I became interested in quite how vague some of the memories mentioned in our film talk were. Sometimes it was as though participants were trying to remember a dream:

Pam (go-along, after *Inception*): There was one film, I can't remember what it was now, where you enter into things through a sort of one of these virtual experience things, you know you put these things on and then you were in it, and then somebody else in there trying to kill you, you know, in this virtual world. And it [*Inception*] was a bit like that, really, you just felt as though they were in there just playing mind games and I sort of thought well it's either a game or it's a thriller and it didn't seem to know which one it was really, did it?...

Theresa (go-along, after *Alice in Wonderland 3D*): And there was another one I saw here... it was about a corporate rip off ... Matt Damon. It was a sort of double bluff. Very well done, I can remember enjoying it, but nothing else at all.

Joan (go-along, after *Four Lions*): ...um, they made a film I can't remember what it was called, about dinosaurs which I actually loved and Paul Robeson where he sings [singing] 'All old man river'. I remember it fondly but can't remember what that's called or what happened.

Other participants commented on this fading, or 'trace', memory of films too. Pat reflects on it as a frustration that comes with getting older:

Pat (go-along, before *Secrets in their Eyes*): And this is another thing that as I get older I find terribly annoying. If people say 'have you seen such and such' and I know damn right I've seen it, do you think I can remember the storyline? I tell you what, next week *Five Easy Pieces* is on...Wonderful film, Jack Nicholson, wonderful actor and I can't remember from the beginning to the end of the story but I can remember certain scenes because he's such

a good actor and it's such a good film, so certain scenes from films I've liked I can remember, but if I try to put a name to them or even say who was in it I don't and, you know. It makes me very angry. I just know it was good, you know generic good or generic bad. It's very strange.

But while this theme might seem to be a side-effect of working with older audiences at the cinema, Rama, who had been told by a friend's daughter that she might have dementia after failing to remember the name of a film she'd just seen, denied this had any connection to ageing:

Rama (go-along, interval of *It's a Wonderful Life*): So that was, that was the movie *All About Eve*, I don't remember what I saw. I have never remembered what I saw...so I spoke to someone and she laughed and she said to me 'Rama I can't remember [either], it's a bad memory, it's got nothing to do with dementia'... Something has to be special or I don't remember them. And so she gives me a whole lecture of two and a half hours about why can't I remember it.

The fact that, at 30, I also experienced these barely-there, dream-like memories of films appears to suggest it is not age-related. Instead, I think, it is an example of the developing habitus in action. Bourdieu's bodily learning tends to be discussed in terms of physical activities, such as sport or dancing. However, I think that these fragments, read through theories of embodied spectatorship, point to an embodied learning of affective responses to film content producing a form of cinematic habitus. Our responses, the pleasures we get from cinema, appear naturalised but are, in part, the product of limiting structures. This incorporates not just subjective memories of films, but objectively produced notions of appropriate and

inappropriate responses closely linked to moral judgements. This does not mean that we consciously follow norms of behaviour, rather that these principles of behaviour 'exist in a practical state in agents' practice and not in their consciousness or, rather, their discourse' (1977: 27). This relates back to discussions of taste in the previous chapter and again suggests the practical emergence of a mode of generation at the cinema. However, as also discussed, not all practising bodies have equal access to achieving the (somatic) norm (Puwar, 2001). Rather than return to this discussion, though, I would here like to linger on considering the generation of cinematic habitus, in order to think through how representation might be experienced in practice and offer an extension of theories of embodied spectatorship (Voss, 2011; Sobchack, 2004, 2000; Bruno, 2002; Marks, 2002, 2000).

Despite his engagement with significantly different theoretical frameworks, Victor Burgin's (2004) work on the 'remembered film' can be helpful here I think. Burgin (2004) offers a personal exploration of the ways in which fragments of film memory can be so incorporated into our personal memory that they become separated from their source. Elements of his analysis can help to understand how these evanescent memories work at the cinema.

Walking a theoretical terrain that takes in Barthes and Freud, Burgin sets out on his journey concerned by the ways in which fragmented memories of two films had merged with an imagined memory of his mother when she was growing up. Acknowledging work that argues we increasingly encounter 'displaced pieces of films' on the internet and in other media (2004: 10), Burgin is interested in the ways in which we also generate shards of films in our 'psychical space', creating the equivalent of Freud's 'day's residues' (2004: 58). As residues, these film

fragments do not always form linear memories. More often they form fleeting senses of something once known, much like in a dream, memories similar to those described above. To explore the ephemeral nature of these memory fragments, Burgin turns to Barthes' account told in *Camera Lucida* (1982) of the unexpected sadness he felt on viewing a 1926 photograph of a family from Harlem. Barthes works backwards from this emotion to interrogate its source and he finally determines that a necklace worn by the woman in the photograph had prompted it. After a long route around the picture, he concludes that this necklace had unconsciously reminded him of an aunt who had once worn something similar and this (still imperceptible) memory prompted him to think about her 'dreary' life. As Burgin explains, 'Barthes says that the photograph "worked within him" before he knew where the feeling came from' (2004: 60).

What Burgin does is relate this back to the 'day's residues' spoken about earlier. He is concerned with the ways in which these are incorporated into our understanding of the world, arguing that we often combine memories from films with personal memories. We do so in such a way that the memories from film become residual and 'the narratives [in which they were once embedded] have dropped away', creating a 'hybrid object' made up of 'real' and 'reel' memories (2004: 58). It is this falling away of narrative context that can perhaps be seen in the quotes above, in which sometimes only the affect or experience of a film is remembered through the body, rather than the details. Burgin's thesis suggests that this may have an impact on our film experience as he – calling on Freud again – argues that emotions from films can similarly become separated from their original narrative, so that 'an affect may be experienced in isolation from the representation with which it was originally associated' (2004: 61). While Burgin's

concern is with how this detachment functions in our everyday lives, this is important *at the cinema* too. It begins to explain how film-memory may work through the sensing body, even when we are not consciously aware of the emotional associations being made.

Read through Bourdieu (1977), we can suggest that what is described by Burgin in psychoanalytical terms is co-constituted by objective structures, which practically position us in relation to the film through embodied cultural capital. In an argument reminiscent of Barthes' above, Sobchack (2004, 2000) has shown that our body often responds directly to the film, and the account she provides of her fingers sensing a hand on screen before she could consciously comprehend it in many ways recalls Barthes' account of looking at the 1926 photograph. This begins to suggest the development of a cinematic habitus – memories and experiences of films, as well as practices of viewing that have built up over life and become incorporated into our bodies so that elements of them become part of our affective habitus, co-constituting meaning in the moment of viewing through differently affected surrogate bodies (Voss, 2011).

Developing this, I would like to suggest that film memory works in two interrelated ways at the cinema. First, because of the ability of films to recall film (and other) memories, they offer an inherent intertextuality which effects our film experience through conscious recollection and relational meaning-making, continually (re)positioning viewers in relation to the film while also influencing how the film becomes cinema. Second, these film fragments, incorporated across life result in not just a cognitive recognition but a sensory one, one that can be, but is not necessarily, entirely independent of cognitive recognition. The body oscillating between the real and the as-if-real worlds of film and 'reality' (Sobchack, 2004,

2000) is a body mediated by memories that we cannot always directly recall, and which – while being constantly in process, negotiated and renegotiated across fields – nevertheless position us in relation to the screen.

Importantly, as Jones (2001), Voss (2011) and Sobchack (2000) all make clear, and my notes and quotes from participants suggest, this does not mean that such memories override our engagement with the film, disrupting our ability to take it in. Rather, this seems to hint at the complex experience that watching a film is. It is an experience which, in the context of cinema-going, has us (as embodied audience members) simultaneously sitting in the seat at the cinema, surrounded by others known and unknown; in the world of the film, engaging with spaces and characters known and unknown; and in the memory-, thought- or fantasy- world. To me, what this begins to suggest is that, rather than diverting our attention, distraction is a central part of the film experience and our meaning making processes, and not in the way it is conventionally understood to be. It is not a simple distraction from ‘real’ life and its material constraints. Rather film relies on our simultaneous engagement with the ‘real’ world in order to be meaningful, in Bruno’s (2002) words, films rely on this for their *emotion*.

While we were not physically moving in and out of the cinema, like the cinemagoers in Srivinas’ (2010) study, these oscillations – noted by Sobchack (2004, 2000) – suggest to me that although we are sitting still at the cinema, film’s emotional narrative is nevertheless constituted through a process of fading in and out of representation via memories and embodied knowledge. This knowledge is not produced through the purposeful learning of film scholars or cinephiles – rather, it stems from the implicit learning of practice. It is this that we draw on to literally make *sense* of the film. While this collaboration, between viewing body and

film, may be acknowledged in work on embodied spectatorship (Sobchack, 2004, 2000, 1992; Bruno, 2002), it is generally othered in analyses – positioning the imagined spectator while negating the researchers' own positioning which, in part, is responsible for producing the analysis offered (see also Bourdieu, 1977: 24). My own research further suggests that this positioned intertextuality-through-embodied-memory that collaborates with the film to produce cinema relates not just to filmic memories but also to wider biographies and practices.

The next section continues this argument by considering the role wider biographies play at the cinema – both those elements with which we consciously engage and those made in our body. While here again I draw on data from go-along conversations, the embodied element is not, I hope, lost. Rather, chiming with claims in the go-along literature (Anderson, 2004; Kusenbach, 2003), the films seemed to have triggered pre-reflexive or at least taken-for-granted knowledge. Having access to this knowledge can begin to show the relationship between habitus and representation and further attend to the question that is the focus of this chapter.

3. The ways in which embodied biographies impact upon cinematic representation.

At a go-along early in my fieldwork I went to see *Last Chance Harvey* with Lynda at the Rio. I spent the first half of the film dutifully making notes on Lynda's cinema-going practices (or at least those I could observe), and jotting down my reactions to the film, ready to have a conversation during the interval. As soon as the film stopped and the lights came up, however, she offered an opinion that cut through my careful note taking:

I do wish they got the buses correct. I mean one minute you've got a Metroline bus behind you in a taxi in one shot and then in the next shot in the same taxi two minutes later you've got a First bus. Hold on, what happened there? How did he get into the scene? Don't ask. If you must use buses at least get something right. Because now they're not all red buses per se, that's it. End of subject. There used to be. But now you've got all the different bus companies and filmmakers are gona have to start watching that one because *it shows*: If they don't know the difference between a Metroline, who runs the 43 and a couple of others, and the First bus which I didn't see the running number of... So, you've got all these different bus companies and they all look different.

The film that triggered this reaction follows the developing romance between Harvey Shine (Dustin Hoffman), an American who writes advertising jingles, and Kate Walker (Emma Thompson), who works for a market research company based at Heathrow. Harvey travels to London to attend his daughter's wedding and plans to leave as soon as the ceremony is finished, before the reception begins. At the rehearsal dinner it becomes clear that he has been sidelined by his ex-wife's new husband, who his daughter has asked to give her away. When he leaves the wedding the following day, a traffic jam prevents him from getting to Heathrow in time for his flight. He phones work and is fired. He heads to a bar in Heathrow where Emma Thompson happens to also be on her break. The film follows the progress of their relationship, as well as her struggles to control her anxious and clingy mother and his to develop a meaningful relationship with his daughter.

On the basis of this narrative, I had been expecting to have a conversation about the nature of relationships, fathers, weddings, travel or something else that appeared to me to be directly relevant to the film we were watching together. In fact all of that did happen, and with unexpected revelations on Lynda's part, but the first thing Lynda did as the lights went up was to complain about the buses – a detail I had, perhaps unsurprisingly, failed to notice. Lynda's extraordinary ability to identify buses by their colour and to know where they should and shouldn't be stems from her two marriages, both to men who were 'on the buses'. We had been talking about this before the film started, and although she had her own career, the buses had clearly been an important element of Lynda's life. So much so that here her sensitivity to them appeared to disrupt any aimed for effect or affect of the film being screened.

Lynda had warned me about this habit of hers, to spot continuity errors, and she puts it down to her own career, a point of pride from her time in printing. Before the film started she described having spotted such an error in a detective series her husband was watching. She explained:

Um. You know what I mean. You can see it, and you think to yourself 'hold on'. They've had to retake that because somebody's done it... because that wasn't quite like that when it started so therefore... Hmm. That's a retake, so they've done the splice and sort of mixed one with the other. It's something that depends on how blatant it is. I think partly it's because the job I did in the print was to spot errors. Cos I did a lot of proof reading as well. I wasn't paid to proof read, I was paid to typeset... But, if I spotted a spelling error I wouldn't do it. I would correct it as I went.

While this is a crude example, which perhaps implies the producer/consumer model I am keen to escape, it serves as an example of a theme – of embodied biography as impacting on our engagement with film – that was to recur across the majority of my go-alongs in a variety of different ways. Sometimes, as with this example, the impact of biographies were spoken about in a taken-for-granted way (as though this were a universally experienced issue with the film), exposing the naturalised assumptions of habitus. At other times the film resulted in conversations about elements of a participant's biography that were heretofore undisclosed – implying that a triggering of such memory occurs during film viewing. To me, both suggest the same process: that a film's meaning and affect are co-constituted by embodied biographies in the audience. I say *co*-constituted because these positioned biographies do not just influence the ways in which we produce film meaning in the moment of viewing, but also because films, in turn, impact upon the ways in which we relate to these biographies (see also Gillespie, 1995 on 'TV-talk').

If the word 'gift' is replaced with the word 'film' then this begins to suggest something similar to Bourdieu's analysis of the meaning of the gift in Kabyle society in that, 'it receives its meaning, in any case, from the response it triggers off, even if that response is a failure to reply that retrospectively removes its intended meaning' (1977: 5). By recognising the practical temporalities of film representation we can begin to see that meaning does not pre-exist the film's engagement with the audience in practice. Instead, it is made in the moment, in practical time, a time that is both instantaneous and historical. Although it might seem spontaneous, any meaning we make is necessarily from a particular position in social space and as Bourdieu argues, by virtue of being so, tends to reproduce

that position. In the following two sections I consider the ways in which biography emerged as key in my research. First, I explore the relationship between affective habitus and the co-constitution of film before moving on to look at the ways in which the film serves to draw out such pre-reflexive biographical information.

3.1 Affective habitus and the co-constitution of film as it becomes cinema.

During our conversation before seeing *Four Lions*, Joan touched on precisely this point when she was speaking about early memories of cinema, with her friend Diane. They had begun by talking about Joan's first experience of seeing *Ben Hur* (1959):

Joan: I remember enjoying it [*Ben Hur*] like that but my mother was brought up really poor, in the Victorian era and in a very, very poor part of London, Bethnal Green, and she had great empathy and sympathy for the people who had absolutely nothing, you know the ragged schools and all that and they lived in a tenement building, erm, they were poor children, mum and dad, in about two rooms, and it was largely a Jewish community.

Diane: I was gonna say that, you're not Jewish are you?

Joan: No, but you don't have to be Jewish to be born in Bethnal Green. Ha ha... And I was brought up with all of these sad, sad stories

Diane: What like silent movies?

Joan: No, you know like the mother is either *abandoned* or the father's at sea, she's got no money, she's got this shawl and the *ailing* baby and the *ailing* child and all she's got is an attic and then one of them dies, one of the

children dies and this sort of thing so I think always as a youngster quite liked anything where like there was triumph.

Diane: Survival.

Joan: And you think, you know, ooh, when they were whipped [in *Anthony Adverse* (1936)], God my heart used to bleed. But you know as you get older you start getting hard. Ha ha, but I mean some of the influences I think in your life make you feel in particular ways...used to feel it, you know when the other one was whipped and all that.

As Joan spoke, she moved her body in a way that appeared to imply a defeat against emotion, exhaustion from the empathy felt. At the word 'whipped' she flinched, each time she said 'ailing', she clutched her chest and screwed her face up tightly as though she was recalling those sensations on the spot, so entrenched were they.

Pat, who was a 'looked after' child and didn't live with her mother and five siblings until the age of eight, also explains her earliest memory of the cinema in such a way as to draw out the affective habitus in film viewing:

Pat: Well, one of the first [times I remember going to the cinema], I am not sure if it was the first, is to see *Bambi* and I can remember it taking over my emotional senses, um, because at the time losing his mother, or he gets lost, I can't remember the story now.

Me: the mother gets killed.

Pat: Is it that she gets killed?

Me: Yeah, she gets shot.

Pat: That's right and the little baby's left, that's right. And I can remember all the feelings of my younger life and just crying. I think I missed a lot of it, a lot of the story, simply because I was overwhelmed with emotion. That I do remember.

What is striking about these two examples is that neither Joan nor Pat suggests that their life experiences influenced how they understood the meaning of the film. Instead, it is that these life experiences impacted upon how they *felt* on viewing these films. This indicates that these biographical details, shaped by and shaping of our position in social space, suggest not just an inculcation of ways of seeing (as indicated in Lynda's quote), but also ways of feeling, of being affected by films.

These affects, bodily sensations and the comportment that accompanies them, speak not just of individual histories but also their entanglement with socially incorporated ways of being, generated within and producing structuring structures, as part of the affective dimension of habitus. Joan's memory here more obviously suggests a social body than Pat's, which stems from such a decidedly personal experience. However, it was by virtue of inculcated implicit norms surrounding the importance of the mother, *combined with* Pat's personal experience of being a looked after child that *Bambi* was able to generate this affect. Of course, in most societies the importance of the mother is a shared value, and it is this that the film is talking to in trying to produce a particular affect in this scene. The extremity of Pat's response – of being overwhelmed by emotion – stems from it conjuring up emotions relating to the 'real' world, enacting a particular cinema. While, as I have said, it is important to acknowledge that meaning is made within the limiting

structures incorporated through the habitus, this serves as a reminder that they are also, of course, set by the limiting structures of the film itself. Nevertheless this suggests to me that film meaning is made in collaboration with habitus, and generates a more fluid understanding of representation.

This chimes with an important element of Bourdieu's practice theory — that the body and mind are fundamentally intertwined, and here I would like to argue that each influence our experience of, indeed co-constitute, representation in practice. While these two quotes suggest an understanding of the ways in which biographies can impact upon our experience of films, there were, as mentioned, other times when the film served to draw out biographical information.

3.3 Film as a trigger for biographical knowledge.

Sometimes films drew out biographical details in rather predictable ways. For example, after watching *I Am Love* (2009), a film that follows an affair and the subsequent unravelling of a family, Wendy and Sheila reflected on their experiences of infidelity and relationship breakdowns. But at other times it was more subtle and drew out elements of biography that I could not have predicted. It is perhaps import to note here that in using the word biography I hope to avoid the sense that these are all memories of long-gone times. Instead, the films often brought out recent events or on-going concerns. On a go-along to the *The Red Shoes* with Ethel, for example, she somehow linked the madness of the female protagonist with the madness of her downstairs neighbour who had been making her life misery for years.

One moment key to my recognition of this theme was in the interval during a go-along to *De Lovely*, which I was watching with Janet R. Janet R had been very

welcoming but quite closed in our interview, giving what felt like stock answers to my questions. But in the interval to the film she suddenly opened up about a very personal issue. What brought this forward was a scene in the film that I had almost missed because, as she correctly points out below, it was insignificant to the film experience I was enacting. There had been a very short section of a scene in which Cole Porter (of whom *De Lovely* is a biopic) discovers his wife has had a miscarriage. In the interval Janet R remarked:

Yes. And the other thing. This won't mean anything to you but when she's just had the miscarriage or having the miscarriage, she says, 'oh well never mind this obviously wasn't meant to be'. That comes from somebody who's never gone through it.

Me: Oh, I'm sorry. I assume that means that you have?

Janet R: Yes, twice. There were two in between number one and number two. I had two miscarriages. You know, it's so common, but until you've gone there yourself, until I'd had a miscarriage, I didn't know anybody who had and when I talked about it I discovered all these people who had been through it. And when I told our children, I can't remember at what stage, one of the boys said, 'that means there would have been five of us' and I didn't want to say, 'well no, we wouldn't have gone on to have you'. That's not the thing you say is it? ... And when I had them, I mean I don't know the rules now, until you'd had three miscarriages they don't actually do any investigating. But you know, I think oh well, maybe there was something wrong with the baby. Because it is medically referred to as an abortion, which I found quite distressing... And then you hear that people go on and

on and on trying. Because I'd already had a baby at least I knew I had that. But each time I miscarried I got closer to Rachel [Janet's first daughter], so if anything had happened to her I would have been, I might have been...

By revealing deeper levels of biographical information and emotion, this begins to hint at the ways in which film can function not just as an object of but also a tool in research. As mentioned in Chapter Four, it was having these conversations on different go-alongs that drew me to thinking about the ways in which film's virtual mobility provided a similar methodological function to the walking in go-alongs (Pink, 2008a, 2008b, 2007a, 2007b; Moles, 2006; Anderson, 2004; Kusenbach, 2003). This example clearly cannot be considered 'pre-reflexive' knowledge — it is a memory of a very significant event in Janet R's life. But it is a deeper level memory and more involved biographical fragment than the narratives given in interviews. In this sense, while not pre-reflexive, this information has had significant impact on the film constituted by Janet R and it is unlikely to have been brought out in a conventional interview situation. Drawing memories such as this out not only raised the potential of go-alongs for exploring films and cinema-going, and vice versa, but also drew out an element of representation in practice that I would like to explore further here.

Another example of this came after watching *Up in the Air* with Joyce at the Clapham Picturehouse. During the film the two main characters — Ryan played by George Clooney, and Alex played by Vera Farmiga — attend the wedding of Ryan's sister. The night before the wedding, his sister has second thoughts about the marriage. As I experienced it, this was a scene in which Ryan (reluctantly) got to show his softer side as he supported his sister through her cold feet. The issue was not her wedding, but his character development. By the end of the film I had

forgotten all about this bit of the plot but as we sat down to speak about the film one of the first things that Joyce said to me was:

Joyce: I related to it on several levels. First I've been fired twice from a job so I know what that's all about... And I've also called off a wedding. Ha ha!

Me: Really?!

Joyce: Uh huh, not the night before though. Um, six weeks before. I had a grandfather who had wonderful handwriting and that weekend he was going to address all of the envelopes and this was a man, I was living in New York then and he was in Jersey. Who knows why, I was 26, who knows why, or 25, why I was even doing this. Maybe because of the girlfriends at that age had put me on to it. I was already seeing someone else in New York too which is even doubly stupid. And, um, I didn't plan it, um, that it was going to be that weekend I was going to tell this man. He was a lot older than me and when I think about it now it's quite extraordinary. I was 25, he was 43 with four children, the youngest being five. And he had teenage daughters, one of the oldest who was not a fan of mine, so I mean I was one year older than her! So um and I, he picked me up. I used to. I guess I used to go home every weekend and um he picked me from the bus on Friday night and we were out at a restaurant and I just said to him 'I can't do this' and he really left the table and he was physically ill and I had to drive home. Drive us home. Drive me to my house and then, um, but there was no way.

Evidently, my experience of these films had differed significantly from the women I was with, both of whom had been reminded of painful experiences in their life by virtue of what appeared to me to be insignificant scenes, or sub-plots. This of

course often happened in reverse, and there were many films that I watched during my research where I experienced emotional responses or made connections that were not necessarily there for the woman I was watching with. And, while different genres did appear to do this to varying levels, this prompting of emotion doesn't have to be to do with an element in the plot. As we have seen, it can be to do with memories of having watched the film before as well as other films or television programmes seen, and it can also be triggered by non-verbal elements of film – music, imagery, lighting, costume and so on. One example of a completely unexpected connection was when I was watching *Nine* (2009) with Joanna. The film is about the production of a grand musical and so involved a lot of glittery show costumes. On reviewing my notes during data analysis I found a record of an unexpected effect the glitter had on me:

The glitter on the costumes has a very peculiar effect on me, it makes me feel nostalgic for something... I've just remembered what it is! My Dunlop trainers that I had as a teenager [they had a glittery 'D']. Nostalgia rushes over me, I am in my design GCSE classroom, back at school, smelling those stairs...

As with Jones' (2001) memories during *Saturday Night Fever*, this memory did not overwhelm my engagement with film. Instead it in part determined it, without such embodied sensorial memories I would have watched a different (albeit subtly) film.

Although the examples given above stem from things participants said, what interests me here is not what my data suggest about meaning making *after* the viewing event. Rather, I am keen to explore the practices of viewing at the cinema and the process of meaning making *in the moment* that this talk implies. I am keen

to think through how this reciprocal relationship between biography and representation impacts upon the meaning making process in the moment of viewing and, thus, on our experience of representation in practice. I would suggest that these lived biographies impact upon our experience of media 'texts' not always through conscious acceptance or rejection of the representation but, rather, through the gradual inculcation of expectations, interests and embodied pleasures. These, in turn, co-constitute affective dimensions of habitus and associated embodied enactments of representation and narrative – offering a version of cultural sensoria (Marks, 2000) understood through Bourdieu that enables the consideration of it at play in all cinema. It suggests that the different layered dimensions of habitus are practically engaged in the meaning making process, drawn out with particular film-fields.

We have seen that Bourdieu (1977, 1990a) offers a way of understanding how these biographies might be present, impacting upon our film experience through the habitus, without us necessarily consciously calling them up. If the habitus is 'a past which survives in the present' in the form of 'embodied histories' (Bourdieu, 1977: 82), then considering it via Sobchack's (2004, 2000, 1992) work suggests embodied biography might be influential at the cinema, sometimes in imperceptible ways. As outlined in Chapter One, Sobchack (2004, 2000) uses her concept of the cinesthetic subject to move beyond understandings of film viewing as a predominantly cognitive experience. Instead, she argues that although we do not actually feel the film touch us or taste the food on the screen, the lived body of the cinesthetic subject experiences an ambiguous oscillation between the 'real' and the 'as if real' that serves to momentarily conflate the lived body of the spectator and the representation on the screen (2000: 23).

Sobchack's (2004, 2000) work provides a useful framework for understanding and advocating for the embodied experiences of cinema as practice. However the cinesthetic subject that she presents is an 'essential' one. While she acknowledges that the body at the cinema is 'always also a qualified body', she does not suggest the ways in which such difference might be incorporated into her understanding. What I hope my data has helped to draw out is that this oscillation is neither universally experienced, nor entirely individual. In an attempt to incorporate an understanding of difference to Sobchack's work, I would like to suggest that those biographical details brought out through the film talk quoted above do not just indicate the conscious incorporation of experience in our engagement with film. Instead, they are the surface representations of a process that also occurs within our bodies as they respond to the films and co-constitute meaning in the moment, through differently positioned sensing bodies. This is not an issue of legibility. While we might agree on the overarching story of a film, we are far less likely to agree on whether we like it or dislike it, on how it made us *feel*.

In this way, these discussions begin to open up a conversation about the ways in which our embodied biographies might come to influence how representations are experienced in practice — a key question for this project. Importantly, it begins to offer a way of thinking through the 'perversity of spectators', identified by Staiger (2000), without reverting to an understanding that relies on a universalised conception of the spectator, or on differentiated audiences that have a pre-determined, predictable, acceptance or an rejection of a film's 'preferred reading'. Instead, dispositions are 'objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them and, being all this, collectively orchestrated without being the product

of the orchestrating conductor' (1977: 72). Our embodied biographies become inseparable from the film made cinema and co-constitute the experience, the perception, of representation, if not indeed the representation itself.

Like my arguments in section two this is reminiscent of Srivinas's (2002, 1998) concept of 'participatory viewing', in which audiences are understood a producer rather than consumer of meaning as they use their biographies and repetitive viewing to (loudly) disrupt film narratives at the cinema. As I hope to have shown here, this process – of audience members being part of meaning production – does not require explicitly disruptive behaviour such as that described by Srivinas. Instead, it can be an embodied and pre-reflexive disruption that nevertheless results in the meaning made through cinema, and indeed in our subsequent film talk. While I would like to present an understanding of film audiences as active producers of meaning, I do not wish to suggest that we all have equal access to all meanings. As shown in the previous chapter, these embodied biographies position us relationally over time in social space, not just in relation to others but also to film representations. Such positioning impacts upon our affective habitus and co-constitutes representation and practice.

Differentiated bodies, then, can indeed make their own meaning, but only within the multi-layered limiting structures that have produced their habitus (Bourdieu, 1990a: 54). As such, in suggesting an active audience I do not wish to shift away from the politics of representation. Rather, I am hoping to offer an interpretation that is drawn from a lived audience and therefore enables us to consider these as lived politics, maintaining an understanding of pleasure, and assuming neither a passive spectator nor one that is actively resisting meaning.

4. Conclusion: engaging the cinematic habitus to understand representation in practice.

Hugman (1999: 194) notes that contemporary western society tends to limit the value of older people to their role as ‘lived history’, valuing only their ability to tell us about the past and thus negating any contribution older people may make through their activities in the present. Keen to avoid reinforcing this, I made it clear to my participants that I was mainly interested in their contemporary cinema-going. Nevertheless, almost all offered up memories such as those quoted throughout this chapter. While this could be seen as an example of them fulfilling an inculcated expectation to talk about the past, it seems clear to me that these memories were nevertheless with these women – and mine with me – at the cinema, and some were specific to the triggers in the film we had just watched together. I hope to have shown here, too, that these memories are not just experienced cognitively, but also through the body. A remembering body is affected differently. As we have seen, this suggests that we make films differently in relation to subjective experiences. These subjective experiences are, however, constituted within objective structures. Because of this, we are relationally positioned in social space by subjectivities. These positions, in turn, influence our affective habitus, which co-constitutes film as it becomes cinema. This further develops a positioned embodied filmography, which in turn continually affects representation, and is used by the surrogate body to make sense of the film (Voss, 2011; Bruno, 2002).

By understanding cinema as practice through Bourdieu’s theory, I hope to have gradually developed a sense of our developing cinematic habitus at play here. In doing so this chapter begins to offer insight into how representation might be

experienced in practice, and shows that it is inextricably linked to how differentiated bodies practise the cinema differently. It is this habitus, our structured and structuring lived past experiences, that influences our practice in the present, while being influenced by it. Understood in this way, the construction of a 'preferred reading' does not necessarily have to be a rational, conscious, action of rejection. Instead, it is an inevitable consequence of going to the cinema: our cinematic habitus in many ways determines the limitations surrounding the ways in which film becomes cinema. That is not to say this is always pre-reflexive, clearly many of the memories and concerns quoted in this chapter are conscious and we are aware of thinking them at the cinema. It is this fluid movement between the two key themes from my data – biography, and film or cinema memory – and the film on the screen that means our practising bodies co-constitute representations and narrative. This suggests that the meaning making moment ensures differentiated bodies practice cinema differently, as cinema is enacted in a sense through such difference.

Stewart (2003), whose work on early black spectatorship is discussed in Chapter Two, argued that the mixed programmes provided by cinemas in the early twentieth century complicate attempts to understand this audiences' engagement with classic Hollywood films and their racist content. Cinemas in the 1910s, she explains, did not screen one feature film that the audience watched from start to finish. Rather, they offered a varied programme including shorts and live performances. The meanings of the classic Hollywood films, then, were not fixed. Rather, they were enacted in the moment of viewing and in relation to the other elements of the programme. Her concept of 'reconstructive spectatorship' emphasises how black viewers reconstituted the racist screen and asserted

themselves through spectatorship, disrupting the denigration by determining how meanings were made (2003: 653). I hope to have shown that while these mixed programmes no longer exist, the practice of enacting meanings in the moment is very much alive in our cinematic habitus.

As I argued in the previous chapter, the nature of cinema-going as a public practice is significant to this as such meaning is co-constituted collectively with the other bodies in the audience. In this way, the viewing body does not arrive at the cinema as a pre-existing entity but is instead defined in practice and in relation to the material spaces of viewing. The discussion in this chapter has begun to suggest the ways in which film's spaces might be constituted through a lived audience and their affective habitus. The following chapter continues this discussion, as well beginning one around the ways in which the viewing body is not just shaped through past practices but also exists in a co-constitutive relationship with the space of viewing. I move on, then, to explore the ways in which the spaces of cinema are constituted, those both on and off the screen.

Chapter Seven. The sensual geographies of cinema space.

The previous two chapters have outlined some of the ways in which we can understand cinema as practice, and explored the alternative but complementary insights offered to studies of film and cinema when we do so. In arguing that our cinematic habitus co-constitutes the film in-the-moment of viewing the previous chapter brought the temporalities of practice to the fore. But if practice is temporal, it is also spatial and in this chapter I aim to continue these discussions by paying attention to the spatialities of cinema, specifically those related to the film on the screen and the material space of viewing. In doing so this chapter speaks to the question, in what ways are the spaces of cinema constituted?

Considering my interest in this question, it is perhaps unsurprising that the spatialities appeared very important as I analysed my data. Although I may have been more aware of them as a result of this ‘foreshadowed problem’, by engaging with my own research via existing work I hope to show in this chapter that to understand cinema as practice, a consideration of its spaces – material, imaginary and symbolic – is essential. Three key elements came out of the analysis: the different ways in which (ageing) bodies interact and co-constitute the material spaces of cinema; the spatial mobility of the films themselves and, finally; the inclusion of domestic practices in the public space of cinema. My aim through this discussion is to show that this project can offer a valid contribution to the existing work on the spatialities of cinema, just as that work offers support for some of my findings. The focus of this chapter, then, is the third of the three key elements that I argue make up cinema as practice: space. To explore it, however, I inevitably engage with both the body and film, further indicating the ways in which the three are co-implicated in cinema as practice.

As Chapter Three explained, Bourdieu's treatment of space is influential to the understanding that emerged from my research. Although, by his own admission, his understanding of the Kabyle house reverts to the kind of structuralist analysis his theory of practice aims to overcome, key across all engagements with space in his work is his emphasis on understanding it *through the body*. Qualifying his own analysis, Bourdieu makes clear that the built form of material ('inhabited') space should not be understood as representations, abstracted from practice, from use by bodies. Instead, it is our body 'which structures practical space' (1977: 2). But just as space is constituted through the body, so does material space contribute to the on-going formation of habitus. The built form teaches bodies their relationship to its structures, offering a form of 'implicit pedagogy' (1977: 94). This analysis has quite a lot in common with the understanding of exhibition space put forward by Bruno (2002) and other work on histories of cinema (Allen, 2011; Gomery, 1992; Hansen, 1991). Importantly, however, Bourdieu offers a contribution to these understandings by emphasising that such structures are 'read with the body', bodies which 'make the space within which they are enacted as much as they are made by it' (1977: 90). This suggests that the material spatialities of cinema are co-constituted by the audience.

In the first section of this chapter, then, I engage this debate through my empirical work, outlining the understanding of cinema space that arose from the data. As the above might suggest, rather than offering an analysis of the cinema architecture and the audience or practices of spectatorship it can be interpreted to 'imagine' or invite, this section explores the ways in which the lived audience uses cinema sites in practice. Doing so has much in common with the aims of the critical geography of architecture (Jacobs, 2006; Lees, 2001) introduced in Chapter Two,

but while I am keen to draw out the ways in which I found such spaces to be constituted by embodied practice, I don't want to lose sight of the 'implicit pedagogy' of buildings that Bourdieu (1977) emphasises in his understanding. As such, I engage observation notes from across go-alongs to draw out the ways in which I found the material space of cinema differently constituted by participants and me, while also emphasising the significance of material space to producing (older) bodies that know their 'place' (1977: 94).

When exploring visual practices a focus on spatialities is not just about the venue of viewing. Rather, as Rose (2011: 11) points out, 'the sorts of geographies practically constituted through such [visual] events may well exceed the immediate location of their event'. Chapter Two outlined work from the geography of film that suggests the building itself does not represent the sum of cinema space (Lukinbeal and Zimmerman, 2008; Aitken and Dixon, 2006; Crang, 2002; Clarke, 1997). And Bruno's (2002) work in particular shows that the virtual mobility offered by moving images means that when we go to the cinema we do not just experience its material space, we journey through a number of spaces with the film and in so doing co-constitute them. In the second section I discuss the ways in which such journeys emerged in my research. Bruno (2002) accessed this mobility by conducting analyses of particular films and positioning film within a history of haptics in architecture and art. For me, it played out in practice through the many imagined journeys undertaken by the lived audiences at the Rio and Clapham Picturehouse. In considering the spatialities of cinema, then, I am not just interested in the material dimension but also, and inseparably, the imaginative and the affective — and the ways in which these journeys described by Bruno (2002) are undertaken by differentiated sensing bodies.

Complicating the argument further is that in addition to this ‘elsewhere’ accessed through the screen, there is another space being emotionally constituted: a sense of home. Rather than see these two apparently opposing forces (of home and away) as contradictory, however, my research suggests that their mutually constitutive relationship is vital to understanding cinema as practice. I am interested, then, in the journeys, home and away, taken by embodied audiences at the cinema and this discussion constitutes the third section of the chapter.

Bourdieu reminds us that it is important not to assume that practices are experienced or undertaken in universal ways by homogenous bodies. Instead members of the embodied audience are socially and politically situated. Having established an interest in the mode of generation being practically asserted at the matinees under study, here my concern is with the particular relevance such a dialectic might offer older women at the cinema, and the ways in which it might be understood to contribute to a logic of practice that keeps them coming despite the apparently ageist (and racist and sexist) screen by which they are confronted.

1. Making the spaces of cinema: the co-constitution of embodied practices and spaces of viewing.

As mentioned above, Bourdieu argues that we must ‘not forget that the “book” from which children learn their vision of the world is read *with the body*, in and through the movements and displacements, *which make the space within which they are enacted as much as they are made by it*’ (1977: 90, my italics). Although he is referring here specifically to learning in early life, we can see that this process continues in various ‘inhabited spaces’ across the life course, as they are co-constituted by practising bodies. As outlined in Chapter Two, Laws (1996) offers a genealogy of the different spaces associated with older people across

time, arguing that they constitute what it means to be older in society at particular historical periods. This is not a one-way influence, however, and Laws points to the reciprocal relationship between the social and the spatial to understand how aged identities are (re)constructed by, and reflected in, built environments (1996: 91). Since Laws' work, many others have adopted this approach in various settings but all remain focused on spaces of care – either care homes or home care (McHugh, 2000; Hockey, 1999; Moss, 1999; Mowl et al., 1999). Reading this work in light of the discussions in Chapter Five, I would like to suggest that there is a spatial element to the mode of generation enacted at the cinema as it produces a new space of ageing, just as it is in part produced by it. The two are mutually constitutive.

In Chapter Two, I explained that a growing interest in film exhibition has produced a number of analyses arguing that across history different modes of spectatorship have in part been constituted by the cinemas they were housed in, as well as broader changes in society (Jancovich et al, 2003; Bruno, 2002; Hansen, 1991; Gunning, 1989). Bruno (2002) takes this a step further in arguing that spectatorship is an architectural practice (2002: 44). To Bruno, film becomes cinema through its interaction with architecture. Her understanding encourages an acknowledgement of cinema as *situated* embodied practice, as she evocatively argues:

‘Film is always housed. It needs more than an apparatus in order to exist as cinema. It needs a space, a public site – a movie “house”. It is by way of architecture that film turns into cinema. Located in the public architecture of the movie theatre, the motion picture is a social, architectural event.’ (2002: 44)

Bruno takes this theory into the analysis of the different modes of cinema offered by two specific sites – Kiesler’s Film Guild and Loew’s Paradise Theatre – arguing that ‘the configuration of the [Kiesler] movie house “projected” a specific film experience to its spectatorial body’ (2002: 47).

Exploring my research questions at the cinema, I became interested in this interaction between film, bodies and architecture. I was struck by the ways in which the built form of the cinema seemed to be constituted differently through practice. As discussed, this is a point of interest, too, for a growing body of work within the geography of architecture keen to avoid black box producer/consumer models by exploring the ways in which practices co-produce buildings through use (Jacobs and Merriman, 2011; Saville, 2008; Jacobs, 2006; Llewelyn, 2004, 2003; Lees, 2001). Drawing on geographies arguing that consumption is as an ‘active, embodied and productive *practice*’, Lees (2001) calls for such an approach to be applied to architecture, explaining that it enables the exploration of ‘the ways that the built environment is shaped and given meaning through the active and embodied practices by which it is produced, appropriated and inhabited’ (2001: 55). This, then, offers useful way to bring together my findings with Bruno’s (2002) work as we begin to see the architecture produced in part through practice. In this way, the effects and affects of building design cannot be fully understood without exploring practices of use. Buildings from this perspective are constituted in interactions with lived bodies – an approach that chimes with what I find the most productive elements of Bourdieu’s comments on space, and that resonates with my findings discussed below.

Schatzki’s (2005; 2003) work on practice-arrangement meshes is also complementary to such an approach. He uses the term arrangements to

encompass 'both entities in, and layout of, material settings' (2003: 195). These are given co-constituted meaning through practice, as they are constituted in particular practice-arrangement meshes. Although accessed via different theoretical frameworks, this has much in common with Nast and Pile's (1998) use of the term 'proxemics' – described by them as the relationship between 'spatialised practices of the body and the *bodily production* of space and *place*' used to understand the 'mutual constitution of places-bodies' (1998: 309, 305). Taken together this work supports my findings, and implies that an exploration of the 'movie house' is necessary if we are to understand cinema as practice. Undertaking such an inquiry from a practice perspective emphasises the lived relationship between audience and the exhibition site and my go-alongs led me to confronting this directly, in the moment of practice. The interactions found there offer a perspective that suggests a potentially fruitful extension to Bruno's (2002) compelling understanding.

1.1. Navigating the interior of the Rio Cinema.

The auditorium at the Rio is divided in two, with a wide balcony at the back, stretching across the full width of the room, suspended above stalls which begin underneath it and spread out to the stage at the bottom of the screen (see figs. 5 and 6). This spatial division created a de facto segregation as, with few exceptions, those who sat upstairs were relatively able-bodied, while those in the stalls (frequently on trips with care homes) were often more infirm. This was a division noted by the event organiser as she encouraged me to recruit from upstairs because the people who sat there tended to be more 'lively'. Almost all of the women I attended the cinema with chose a balcony seat, often explaining that they did so in order to let others more in need take the ground floor seats. Patricia

was an exception to this because she always sat downstairs despite being relatively able-bodied.³¹



Figure 5. The stalls at the Rio with the balcony intersecting

Although the women who went upstairs claimed that it was to leave the more accessible seats for those less able, it was clearly a matter of importance to them that they belonged up there. It seemed to relate to the emergent mode of generation discussed in Chapter Five, and to a practical disavowal of the physical deterioration in later life for as long as possible. I suggest this because while for Janet R and Susan this walk didn't seem to offer any particular obstacles, for most participants getting up the stairs was in fact not easy (see figs. 7 and 8).

The staircase it seemed became a site of assertion and struggle. The way that some of the women ascended the steps made me tangibly aware of every feature, seeing and sensing a very familiar space anew through an unfamiliar practice-arrangement mesh (Schatzki, 2005; 2003). Participants, for example, used the layout of the curved staircase in such as way as to transform it into a system of

³¹ At the time of our go-along she had just returned from a two week walking holiday traversing the St James' Way in Spain, a medieval pilgrim route to the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela.

support while simultaneously exposing to me its status as a barrier – constituting a different space to that which I had perceived on many previous trips up the ‘same’ staircase:

Ethel (go-along): *As we walked up the stairs I couldn’t help notice Ethel’s delicate body take on a certain determined strength. She grabbed the bannister and pulled herself up with her right hand, step by step, one at a time, clutching her coffee in the other. When we got to the top I realised she had been bent over almost double during this process when she straightened up, reorganised her clothes and exhaled. The effort she had taken to get there was palpable.*

Joanne (go-along): *The larger-than-life Joanne shrunk before my eyes as we walked upstairs. I had never noticed a limp before but as she tackled the stairs she seemed to noticeably rock side to side, as though it took all of her strength to climb each step. She held on to the wall as she went and through her expert use it seemed as though that was its always-intended function.*

Maria (go-along): *Despite Maria’s foot being in plaster she insisted on walking up the stairs. Handing me her crutches she looked up to the top of the first flight and took a deep breath. Having braced herself, Maria began walking up, using a skilled sequence of manoeuvres that made the evident effort seem somehow effortless. First she put her ‘able’ foot on a step, followed by a two handed grab of the bannister and delicate placement of her plastered foot onto the same step, a movement that was repeated up*

the first section of stairs when she rested on a landing that sits between two sections of the stairs, and which I had never noticed before.

Although these notes describe a physical struggle, in offering them I do not wish to reproduce a representation of older people as fragile or infirm. While the descriptions may be of a struggle, in the moment the acts spoke of strength and elegance rather than weakness or degeneration, and did nothing to disrupt the determined neatness described in Chapter Five.

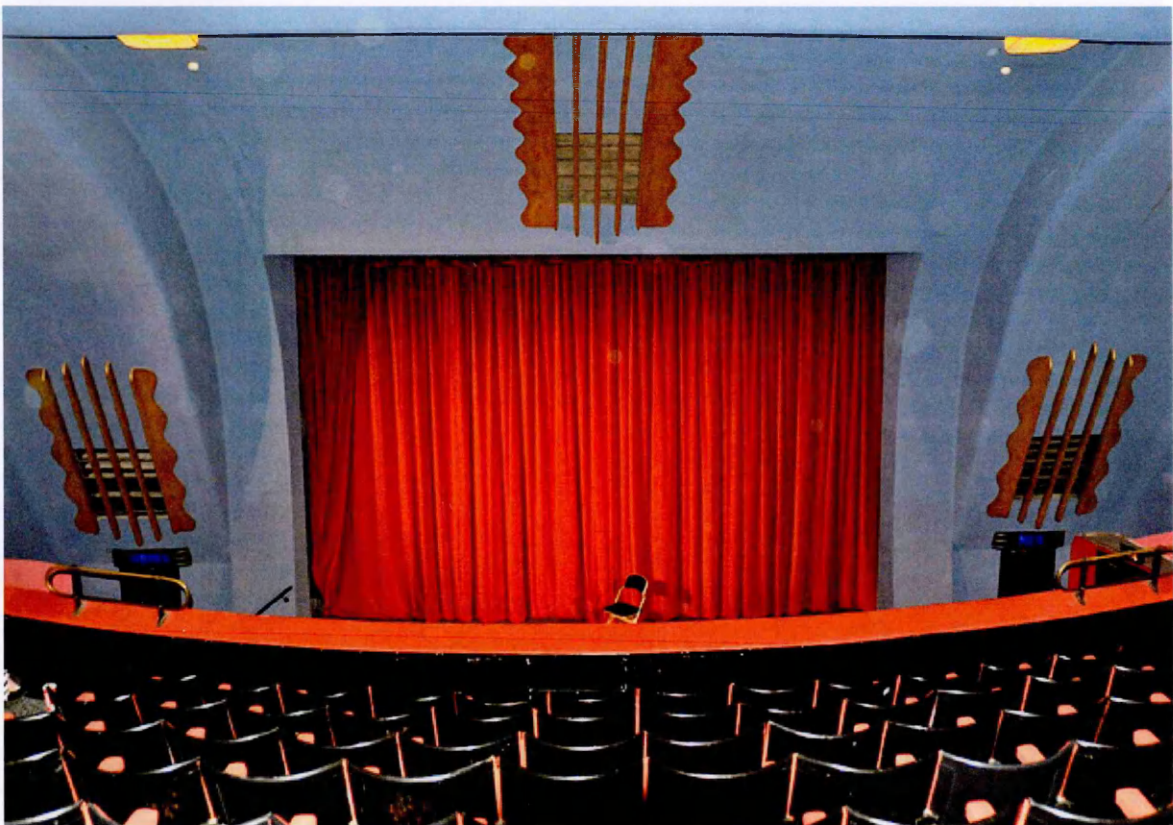


Figure. 6. View from the Rio balcony



Figure. 7. The sweeping staircase in the Rio foyer



Figure. 8. The top of the main Rio staircase, and the smaller flight to the balcony

One of the ways I found this interesting also relates to arguments in that chapter. While the women could have strolled easily to a seat in the stalls, they nevertheless took the slightly more difficult route upstairs, implying that sitting there has greater significance. To me this began to hint at a broader implication for the practice of cinema. By going to the cinema, participants were (re)inserting their

bodies into public space and everyday practice, generating an alternative 'space of ageing' by doing what *feels* right. In this way the 'new' space of ageing and mode of generation are mutually constitutive (Laws, 1997). In addition, by going up the stairs at the Rio, membership of the active ageing, of the 'young-old', was being further asserted. Perhaps most importantly, in taking this journey the women revealed a malleability to material space that I had previously been unaware of. It suggested that the seemingly fixed nature of the cinema interior is partly defined in the moment through embodied practice. This was perhaps brought to the fore because of working with older bodies, many generating subtle but significant barriers to movement, but my experience both resonates with and contributes to the approach adopted by the critical geography of architecture. This experience it emphasised not just that buildings are made in the moment through practice, but that the making of these buildings will differ depending on the body that is undertaking the practice (Hansen and Philo, 2007; Dorn, 1998).

This raises my second interest in these observations — the ways in which bodies and material space constitute one another in (cinema as) practice. I discuss this further in section 1.3 but first I would like to outline similar uses of space at the Clapham Picturehouse. While its four screens remove the de facto segregation provided by the balcony dividing the Rio's only one, trips to screenings upstairs did offer similar examples of the women practically transforming the space to their bodily needs.

1.2. Moving about at the Clapham Picturehouse

While the majority of my go-alongs at the Clapham Picturehouse were in one of the two ground floor screens (see figs. 9 and 10), I went upstairs three times: twice

to the first floor – with Joyce to watch *Up in the Air*, and with Theresa to watch *Alice in Wonderland 3D* – and once on the second, with Joan and Diane, to watch *Four Lions* (see figs. 11 and 12).



Figure. 9. The ground floor of the Clapham Picturehouse (screens three and four)



Figure. 10. Inside screen four at the Clapham Picturehouse. Image courtesy of Picturehouse

Like Janet and Susan, Joyce and Diane tackled the stairs with ease and their

movement rendered a familiar space, albeit slightly changed. Theresa and Joan, however, used the fixtures and building in different ways that again exposed elements I simply hadn't been aware of before and seemed to reconstitute the material space of the cinema in the moment of practice.

Theresa (go-along): As we walk up I notice how skillfully Theresa navigates the stairs despite her cast. She put her bag so that the strap is across her body, popped her glasses on her head and handed me her coffee, she uses one hand and then another to pull her up the steps. At the top, Theresa joked that the thick carpet common in cinemas always makes her feel secure because even if she were to fall on her face, it wouldn't be too bad. Having never thought about it before I am suddenly aware of the particular, muffled, sound [offered by the carpet].

Joan (go-along): Four Lions is at the top cinema at the Clapham Picturehouse – up about six flights of stairs. But Joan, who is incredibly elegant but significantly frail, insists on still going. She found it quite difficult to walk up but used the bannister as a resting place to catch her breath at regular intervals. She starts to wheeze as we go up the final few steps so insists on waiting outside the auditorium before we go in because she doesn't want to interrupt the trailers for the other audience members. As we wait outside, the wall becomes a resting place and Joan props herself up while me and Diane get her some water.

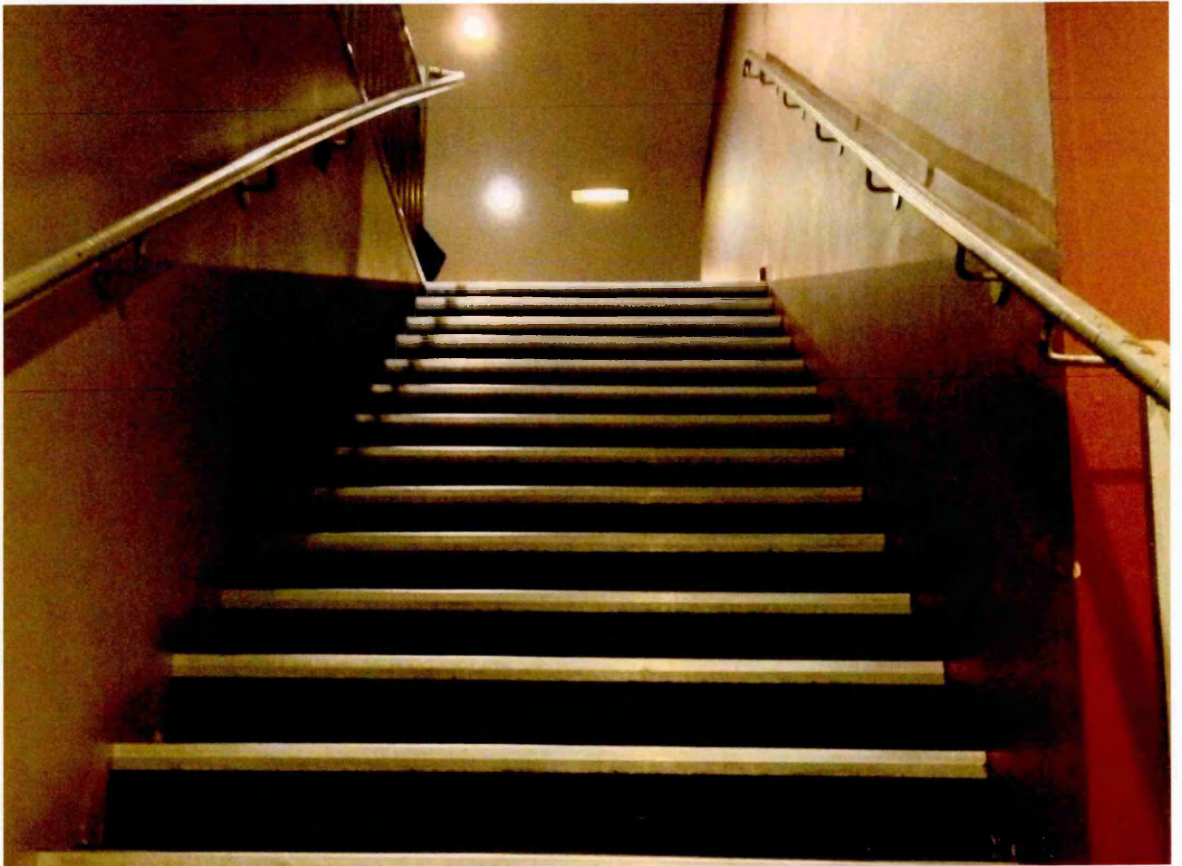


Figure. 11. Stairs up to Screen Three at the Clapham Picturehouse

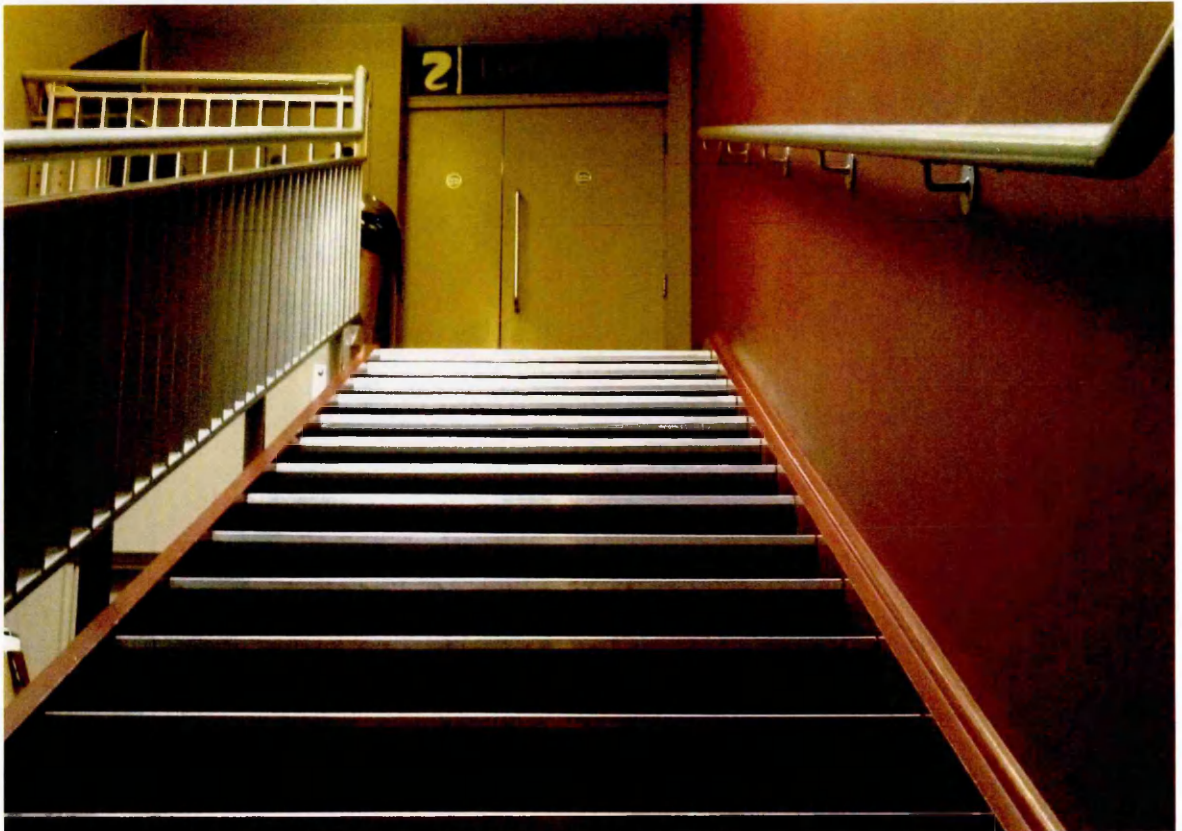


Figure 12. Stairs up to Screen Two (the top) at the Clapham Picturehouse

What the examples above suggest is that while the physical structure of the building and fixtures may not change, practising bodies adapt (as much as it is possible to do so) exhibition sites to their needs. And they do so in habitual, rather than reflexive ways. Fundamental to this is the fact that, as Saville (2008) emphasises in his exploration of the way public space is constituted differently through the skilled Parkour-practising³² body, such changes do not literally amend the materiality of the space. Instead, the ‘physical space changes very little...[it is] the perception of space that shifts’ (2008: 909). This is of course a bodily perception and while I did not share it, being with participants as they moved through the space in a way so different to me did significantly shift my own naturalised perception and exposed to me the nature of seemingly objective elements of buildings as in fact fleeting, unstable and personal.

The go-along meant that I was able to observe the women’s negotiation of the site – one which made me aware of my own — and witness the ways in which this seemed to generate a conversation with the building, ‘transforming’ certain fixtures and fittings to give them what I saw as new functions but which were, of course, only ‘new’ to my embodied perception (and constitution) of the space. Such spatial strategies were not just present as we walked up the stairs. Instead, they continued as we entered the auditorium.

³² Parkour is a predominantly urban practice that in its contemporary incarnation originated in France, with a movement spearheaded by David Belle. Its practitioners, *traceurs*, train their bodies to be highly skilled at jumping and leaping over walls and other ‘obstacles’ in the urban fabric.

1.3. Inside the auditoria: the co-constitutive intersections of body, space and film.

The first go-along I undertook for this thesis was discussed in the previous chapter — I went to the Rio with Lynda to see *Last Chance Harvey*. After a strenuous climb up the stairs, Lynda strode into the auditorium only to stop abruptly and stand still, staring straight ahead. This stillness only lasted for a few seconds but felt quite significant and just as I was wondering what was happening, Lynda turned to me to explain that she had to let her eyes adjust. She then grabbed onto the partition at the back of the balcony and used it to guide her along the platform before getting to the row of seats in which she had left her bag and coat. This moment of stillness on entering the auditorium was to be repeated on almost every go-along and the corresponding use of elements of the buildings' fixtures and fittings as guidance or support would almost always follow it. We can see it in the description offered in Chapter Five of both Edith's and Janet's navigation of the auditorium on leaving the cinema, and a note from my go-along with Norma describes it well:

Norma (go-along, *Salt*): *Norma opened the door of screen two for me as we entered, inviting me in to her space. When she came through she stopped, coffee in hand, shoulders back, and looked at the screen in front of her, adjusting her eyes. As we walked towards her regular aisle seat – six rows from the back – she put her coffee in her left hand while with her right she carefully but smoothly felt the top of each seat along the way. This seemed to be partly for guidance but also support as she lent on each chair as her hand touched it. In this way their curved backs ceased to represent potential places for us to sit. Instead, because of the casual and adept way*

Norma put them to work, I suddenly saw them as a series of posts, there to be used in precisely this manner.

For me, this unfamiliar use of a familiar interior once again constituted a different embodied relationship to the exhibition site to that which I usually experience.

As such, while I felt that the built structure of the cinema remained objectively 'the same', my perception of it was changed on each go-along. That participants' use of the space modified my perception implies there is something transformative about cinema as (an inter-subjective) spatial practice that is worth exploring.

However, while I have presented a dynamic understanding of the material spaces of cinema, here it is important to acknowledge with Bourdieu that this is not a one-way relationship – through use, buildings shape bodies too. In taking practice theory to the cinema, then, it is important to consider the role the exhibition site plays in constituting the embodied audience.

While I am here keen to avoid a producer/consumer model of understanding architecture it is important that in emphasising the fluid constitution of space in practice, we do not end up inverting it by implying complete freedom in such constitution. It is worth therefore highlighting the *co-* in the co-constitutive relationship between bodies and space. The material structures of both limit the spaces and bodies that can be mutually constituted and, just as the perceiving body shifts the space by drawing out different elements through practice, so too does the space draw out particular bodily capacities that serve to position us in space. In this instance, there was an impairment drawn out by the built structures of space as they encouraged the pre-reflexive strategies described above, strategies that could just as easily be applied by children, pregnant women,

someone with a broken leg and so on. This is a complex and nuanced co-constitutive relationship, though. While engaging this space may gradually – and increasingly – implicitly ‘teach’ impairment to ageing bodies, in moving through the space they challenge this in unexpected and resourceful ways. In doing so, they further constitute the emergent mode of generation appropriate to the *publicisation* of spaces of ageing.

In arguing this I do not mean to imply that there is a fixed objective space which older bodies shift through engagement with an embodiment and practice unforeseen by the architect. Instead, the difference between participants’ movements through space as compared to mine exposed that I took my own constitution of the space for granted and had assumed it was an objective perception. While my perception of space significantly shifted by moving through it with older bodies in need of (often minimal) support, this does not mean participants experienced it as a shift. Instead, this was the space they were always ‘in’ when at the cinema, just as my ‘objective’ perception usually is for me.

Much like my arguments about film itself, this work of co-constitution suggests that modes of spectatorship ‘housed’ by cinema architecture do not pre-exist the living audience. Instead, I would suggest that Bruno’s (2002) argument can be productively extended to suggest that the film becomes cinema through architecture as it is constituted by the (differentiated) practising viewing body, just as buildings are constituted by it. Here, as in Stewart’s (2003) analysis, the body becomes a mediating force between screen and architecture. And, as Stewart (2003) argues, neither the film nor the architecture are engaged with by neutral bodies — they are instead socially positioned and determined in relation to each other, and the spaces of cinema. My research suggests that by offering such

embodiments, co-constituted with architecture, as ‘surrogates’ to its *emotion*, film becomes part of a three way mutual constitution (Voss, 2011; Bruno, 2002). Bruno (2002) implies this in calling for an understanding of film representation as *negotiated* by embodied spectators and, separately, *through* architecture but she does not explore how in the moment of practice the two come together as differentiated embodied spectators negotiate and differently constitute buildings. Nor does she consider how they shape one another.

By analysing such spaces through lived use, it becomes clear that they are not just constituted through overarching practice (i.e. cinema-going), but also by different practising bodies. As bodies change across the life course the implicit pedagogy of architecture changes too and it impacts upon our habitus. In so doing, it co-constitutes a subtly different viewing body. If we take embodied theories of spectatorship seriously, then we must integrate an understanding of this social body into our concepts, as I attempted to do in the previous chapter. In this way we can begin to escape not just a universalised understanding of the viewing body, but also of the ageing one (Kontos, 1999). Specific bodies relate to architecture and in doing so constitute different spaces. It seems to me that in practice, then, it is in the interaction between audience, architecture and film – rather than that between the screen and the walls – that film becomes cinema. This doesn’t just challenge fixed understandings of cinema architecture, but also suggests a wider amendment to Bruno’s (2002) understanding.

That film becomes cinema via the mutually constitutive architecture *and* viewing body implies that cinema is generated differently by different habitus that are, in turn, part developed through each viewing event. We can move beyond just the able/disabled or young/old understanding that might be unintentionally implied

here to think that all bodies (or, more specifically all habitus and related dispositions) mutually, and inter-subjectively, constitute the spaces of cinema through practice. In the following I will argue that this does not just apply to the cinema building and interiors but to the spaces on the screen too. To begin this discussion, I once again return to Bruno's thought-provoking work before exploring some of the journeys taken on our trips to the cinema. In doing, so I hope to build on ideas developed in the previous chapter and Chapter Five by thinking through the ways in which cinematic habitus and the spaces on the screen are co-constituted.

2. Watching the film: how the viewing body is implicated in the spatialities and 'virtual journeys' of moving image.

Drawing on Eisenstein's argument that walking through and around architecture is similar to the montage of film, Bruno develops an architectonics of cinema in which 'a spectator is not a static contemplator... she is a physical entity, a moving spectator, a body making journeys in space' (2002: 56). Rather than considering cinema audiences as static voyeurs, Bruno argues, we should spatialise our understandings and recognise that 'because of film's spatio-corporeal mobilisation, the spectator is a voyageur, a passenger who travels a haptic, emotive terrain' (2002: 16). Arguing that tourism and train travel changed the 'relation between spatial perception and bodily motion' in the early twentieth-century, Bruno suggests that they laid the groundwork for our embodied experience of film viewing, in which we are at once still and moving. With this in mind, she argues for an understanding of the female spectator as a *voyageuse*, as 'a relative of the railway passenger and the urban stroller' (2002: 17).

As suggested in Chapter Four, this character closely links to Friedberg's (1993) *flâneuse*, a female spectator of early film who was mobilised by film and shopping, both of which, she argues, played a key role in the feminisation of public space in the early twentieth century. Friedberg (1993) claims that the site of exhibition and the films they screen stem from the same tradition of mobility and combine to create the 'mobile virtual gaze' of cinema (Friedberg, 1993: 89). Importantly, as Bruno notes, this mobility is not just that of the spectator moving through the film — the film becomes mobile through the body too. Because of this, Bruno's (2002) *voyageuse* can, I think, be linked to Voss's (2011) concept of the surrogate body that, by virtue of the 'mental and sensorial-affective resonance' of the film, "loans" a three-dimensional body to the screen' (2011: 145). Both highlight that without a sensing body the film simply would not 'make *sense*'. As such they are useful for thinking through the ways in which film's spatialities are constituted.

This sense of movement-through-film described by both Voss (2011) and Bruno (2002), and the medium's concern with travel, it would seem, has not gone away. Across the course of my research I saw images of what was presented as London (*The Red Shoes*, *An Education*, *Last Chance Harvey*), Yorkshire (*Four Lions*), Liverpool (*Nowhere Boy*), Italy (*Nine*, *Letters to Juliet*, *I Am Love*), Jamaica (*Gainsbourg*), Paris (*The Red Shoes*, *Gainsbourg*), Argentina (*The Secret in Their Eyes*), the South of France (*Julie and Julia*), New York (*Julie and Julia*, *Letters to Juliet*), Los Angeles (*Singing in the Rain*), small town America (*It's a Wonderful Life*), the Mid West (*Calamity Jane*) and several imagined places (*Inception*, *Alice in Wonderland*) to name but a few. As such, while my research design emphasised the importance of going to the cinema with the women who took part, I was continually struck by a second trip we appeared to be undertaking together —

that triggered by the film on the screen. This became apparent to me in three distinct ways: my own partial immersion in another symbolic space away from the cinema; the movement of our bodies when the film finished; and the comments made by the women during our conversations after the films.

In my own experience, the sense of going elsewhere is related, at least in the notes I made during the films, to expansive landscapes. For example, during a scene towards the end of *Inception* I wrote: '[As the] camera pans across the snow-filled landscape, I feel as though I am moving perpetually forward, into another world'. My sensing body echoed this feeling: 'I feel nervous despite myself and my stomach flips. It's like being in a really fast car, [as though] I am actually moving at this speed'. The sweeping landscape shots of Italy used in much of *Letters to Juliet* generated a similar response while the sun-saturated images in both this film and *I Am Love*, also filmed mainly in Italy, set off a sensation on my skin that effected my mood to such an extent I felt a profound sense of being on holiday. This was particularly strong during a scene from *I Am Love* in which Tilda Swinton's character has headed up to visit a soon-to-be lover in his romantic hideaway in the hills outside of the city. During the scene, the couple sit outside and eat a simple lunch on a small sun-dappled table. The combination of food, the light and the sound conjured an intense feeling in me:

As he slices the cheese with a blunt knife there is something about this movement that makes me feel I am there, perhaps not there but somewhere. I can feel the sun on my skin and I can feel the light breeze taking the heat out of the day. I feel the calm of being somewhere beautiful, the elation of finding a secret place... While I am very much in the cinema, I am also somewhere else.

I must stress here that were I not attempting to tune into such sensations, I think that the feelings triggered would have formed a naturalised perception of the film. By paying attention to the work my body was doing I could feel that I co-constituted the spaces of the film in distinct ways. And the way in which I was doing so appeared to be influenced by the (usually pre-reflexive) affective dimensions of habitus, not just in the constitution of the journey in the film, but also the psychological and sensational journey such affect would take me on via embodied memories of similarly made spaces and times. As suggested here, the depiction of food on the screen would often trigger particular, familiar, senses that would carry my whole body to new imagined places, as well as those I had been to before. Interrogating these moments in relation to the cinematic habitus discussed in the previous chapter, I came to realise that they stemmed from a combination of the imag(in)ing of the space on the screen, and a sensorial memory of places with which I associated certain tastes or practices of cooking and eating. In this way, the spaces of cinema were constituted through my surrogate body, which was itself co-constituted with the material space of viewing. To me this suggests a pre-reflexive, affective collaboration between the screen, the architecture and me.

An obvious example of this comes from my viewing *Julie and Julia*. As explained, this film is about chef Julia Childs and a woman, Julie, who sets herself the challenge of cooking every recipe from Childs' classic book *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* — a story that ensures many shots of food, either being prepared or being eaten. This meant that, despite my being significantly disengaged from the narrative itself, the film nevertheless continuously transported my body into its sensorial world.

'Butter bubbles up around a golden cooking chicken. My mouth is watering and I feel like I can somehow smell it through the sound. I catch myself leaning towards the image on the screen, as though if I just get close enough I could taste it too. The sound of the sizzling is so loud that my body seems to think it's there, in the kitchen, and is preparing to devour the feast... my imagining intersects with a memory of my grandmother's kitchen and the smells that would overwhelm me as she prepared her [signature] chicken dish'

Notably, I felt these sensations and bodily memories as a result of this audio-visual experience involving the cooking of chicken despite having been a vegetarian for 23 years. And I had a similar reaction to many of the cooking scenes throughout the film.

These few examples, which represent a small sample of many similar notes made during almost all of the films we viewed, exemplify Sobchack's (2004, 2000) argument. They also chime with the analytic description of her bodily sensations when watching film:

Our embodied experience of the movies...is an experience of seeing, hearing, touching, moving, tasting, smelling in which our sense of the literal and the figural may sometimes oscillate, may sometimes be perceived in uncanny discontinuity, but most usually configure to make sense together—albeit in a quite specific way. Although I cannot *fully* touch Ada's leg through her stocking or Stewart's sensitized nude body on the screen of *The Piano*, although the *precise* smells of fresh laundry and the warmth of the linens that I see in *Pretty Baby* (Louis Malle, 1978) remain in some way vague to

me, although I cannot taste the *exact* flavours of the pork noodles I see in loving close-up in *Tampopo*, I still have a partially fulfilled sensory experience of these things that make them both intelligible to and meaningful for me. (Sobchack, 2004: 76)

The main concern of Sobchack's discussion is to reintroduce the sensing body into our understanding of film. I have shown that Voss (2011) takes this further to argue that the audience act as a 'surrogate' for the film, providing it with a lived form – any sense of place produced by the film is equally provided by the sensing body. Here the kitchen depicted in the film cannot be reduced to its image – it was made through my embodied, affectual, memories of my grandmother's kitchen, triggered by the film's spatio-temporality. It's ability to take me elsewhere. The representation borrowed, as Voss (2011) suggests it might, my body's sensorial memories in order to generate affect that convinced me of being in a kitchen. In this way the journey through the screen was co-constituted in the moment of practice through a collision between my sensing body and the film on the screen both, co-constituted with the material space of viewing.

While I recognise that in drawing this conclusion I may have been influenced by my engagement with the literature, that a journey had been undertaken did also seem to be reflected in comments made by participants. Some would comment directly on the 'trip' we had just been on together without referring to sensations:

Rama (Go-along, after *It's a Wonderful Life*): 'We went to the olden days, isn't it? We went on a trip back in time!'

Patricia (Go-along, as the lights came up after *Singing in the Rain*): 'Do you know I forgot where I was?'

While others did begin to hint at the sensorial element of *feeling* as though they had gone elsewhere:

Shelagh (go-along, after *It's Complicated*): 'Just stunning. Sometimes when they were, I felt I was in the car.'

Janice (after *Gainsbourg*): 'His wife ... when they met, those rainy Paris streets, didn't they look. Uh, I could almost smell them'

And more spoke generally about the journey offered by cinema, by the spatialities of film:

Lynda (after *Last Chance Harvey*): 'I came out I was really, really, stressed out with all of it. I had so much in my brain, that I was ready to bite my husband's head off with it. But because coming here like this and sitting and watching a film, I lose myself in the film, go somewhere else, and suddenly it's not real world but it is fun world'

Ethel (before *The Red Shoes*): 'I'm not travelling again. I used to go every year, sometimes twice. Flying I just don't want to go. I don't know why something just telling me don't go back up there, this is enough. Sitting right here [in the cinema seats], this takes me as far as I need to go'.

Lauretta (Interview): 'And, er, I can only think of that movie, the Italian film, *Cinema Paradiso*, that boy's [the main character's] love for film. That expresses it ... we all sat there in that theatre you know the way he did, absolutely transformed, you saw life and people live a way that you didn't live'.

While these quotes could be understood as evidence of the classical 'distraction' from the world by films, as outlined in the previous chapter it is a distraction formed with our (cinema) habitus that relies on the surrogate body. And although it is difficult to ascertain or evidence the bodily dimension of journeys taken through film, there were certain behaviours that I observed that seemed to suggest a similar affective engagement to that I describe above.

In the description of my trip to the cinema with Edith, offered in Chapter Five, I referred to the way in which our movement at the end of *Closing the Ring* made me feel as though we had just woken up from a shared dream. A similar bodily shift punctuated the end of almost every film viewed and, taken together, offered a sense of us returning fully to the material space of the viewing site.

Wendy (go-along, *I Am Love*): *The music comes to a loud almost overwhelming crescendo and as the titles come up Wendy exhales loudly, pushing her arms out in front of her. I realise I've been holding my breath.*

Barbara (go-along, *Leaving*): *We sit and watch the titles until the end in silence. I never do this! When the lights come up Barbara shakes herself as if she's trying to shake off the film, or shake herself into reality.*

Susan (go-along, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*): *The old familiar closing music rises up against the wonderful Technicolor end frame and Susan inhales loudly turning to me grinning. 'So glamorous,' she says, in much the same way that you might say 'delicious' about something you've just eaten. It is as though she has just consumed the world of the film.*

This feeling of a bodily shift when the film finished is supported by and seems to support Voss' (2011) argument outlined above that:

'it is only the spectator's body, in its mental and sensorial-affective resonance with events on-screen, which "loans" a three-dimensional body to the screen and thus flips the second dimension of the film event into the third dimension of the sensing body. The spectator thus becomes a temporary "surrogate body" for the screen and this body is, for its part, a constituent feature of the filmic architecture' (2011: 145).

I repeat this quote in full here because I would like to suggest that this sensorial 'resonance' does not just rely on a film being 'successful' or not, as Voss (2011) suggests. Instead, as I argued in the previous chapter, it relies on affective habitus and, thus, different bodies will differently constitute its 'three-dimensionality'. What I refer to as 'imaginary space' then is not conjured up by the mind, rather the body-mind that co-constitutes the cinema journey. Importantly, this is not undertaken by bodies in isolation but is, instead, inter-subjective: the members of the audience also affect the sensing bodies, as they set out on their journey together from a particularly constituted space of viewing.

This sense of having gone somewhere together was further strengthened by a loosening up of interviewees after the film. This was not just because watching a film appeared to trigger memories more or less forgotten, and heretofore undisclosed elements of biography. There was also because a tangible effect of our shared, if different, journey was that it offered us a common frame of reference through which to explore such embedded memories, thoughts or feelings. In this way, as suggested, watching a film together seems to offer many of the same

benefits as the 'walking with' described in literature on the go-along. But mobility here is virtual, it is about the sensual geographies of cinema – those found in film, and made through the viewing body.

The examples given here suggest, with Bruno (2002), that we travel elsewhere when we go to the cinema. But as she indicates, this is not just a simple journey to pre-determined places projected on the screen. Instead this relies upon a journey through (sensorial) memories, without which it seems cinema's virtual mobility might not be so affective. We may *see* other places but to go elsewhere we must *feel* them too (Voss, 2011: 146). This is determined in collaboration with the embodied audience who while similar are anything but homogenous. Since different habitus offer different embodied knowledges and corresponding banks of sensorial memory, it seems clear that – building on arguments in the previous chapter – the journeys we take through film are also different. I do not mean that this works literally – I did not have to have been to the place on the screen in order to feel as though I had travelled elsewhere. It is rather that much like the building, the spaces co-constituted by the sensing body and screen will change depending on habitus. Our sensing bodies, then, provide our routes through and to (a version of) the places on the screen. In doing so, our knowing bodies distract us with memories and fantasies which, in turn, engage us further with the moving image. Indeed, having conducted an in-depth study of a lived audience I am inclined to believe that the film only provides some of the itinerary. Our (cinematic) habitus provides the rest (see also Voss, 2011: 143).

I do not want to lose sight here of the integration of the constitution of the building to this process. It is important not just because the surrogate body is, in part, positioned through its co-constitution of the viewing space but also because as we

journey through film we are also anchored in our seats. In this section I have focussed on cinema's mobility and, in chapters Five and Six, I have emphasised the significance of the public nature of cinema as practice. Despite this, there seemed to me to be another spatiality being enacted. There seemed to be a collective sense of home generated at the cinema by participants – a symbolic space more often associated with the private realm. I am intrigued here, then, by how these two oft-opposed realms – public and private – intersect at the cinema. Working with female participants this has particular significance and here I once again begin with Bruno's (2002) work.

3. Cinema as 'mobile home': how the incorporation of domestic practices and comportment transforms the symbolic–affective space of the cinema.

In suggesting we recognise the female spectator of early cinema as a *voyageuse* Bruno (2002) is concerned to break down a set of gendered binaries (home/away, mobile/immobile) that she sees as 'immobilising' women. 'This notion of home', she argues, 'conceived as the opposite of voyage, is the very site of the production of sexual difference' (2002: 86, Bourdieu, too, notes this in his analysis of the Kabyle house 1977:91). Once we mobilise our understanding of spectatorship as above, we can break down the understanding that 'travel alone implies mobility' (2002: 103). It is important to do this, Bruno argues, because the projection of the mobile/sedentary dichotomy onto space is gendered, creating exclusionary structures. In her discussion, she mobilises an understanding of home by projecting it on to the space of the cinema. She argues that, because of its status as public/private space, when cinema first arrived in cities it offered a 'safe' place to engage with the technologies of tourism previously unattainable by women of

lesser means (2002: 82). In doing so, it offered a route into public life and leisure that women had previously been denied.

Today, through work in geographical gerontology exploring the spatial associations of later life, we can see that this binary extends to older people whereby the (care) home is associated with old age and travelling with youth (Cutchin, 2009: 443; Hardill, 2009: 1). Bruno here of course is evoking home, or 'domus', as a theoretical aide in understanding cinema. My research suggests that such a metaphor is also generated in practice, and has implications for understanding cinema-going, perhaps particularly for older audiences. Offering a consideration of visual practices, Rose (2011) suggests that not only are they 'always embedded in particular places', but also that 'it is the practices undertaken in those places which reproduce them as those sorts of spaces (or not)' (2011: 11). In going to the cinema with the women who took part in my research, I was persistently struck by the way in which they made the space feel as though it was somehow *theirs*. From opening doors in order to let me in to the ease with which they navigated the space, the overwhelming sense in my observations was one of them being 'at home' in the cinema. This is something that Srivinas (2010b) found among audience members in Bangalore. Although Rose (2011) is referring to the practices of looking that serve to maintain particular spaces of viewing, such as the way we look in a cinema as compared to the way we look in a gallery, her statement together with Srivinas's (2010b) findings suggests that my sense may have been justified.

In practising domestic, the cinema space becomes an extension of that sphere.

Some of my observations serve to draw this out:

Shelagh (go-along, *It's Complicated*): *I arrived at the cinema to meet Shelagh and she was already hosting a group of friends around the table. As she spotted me she stood up beaming, opened her arms wide, and said 'welcome!' I felt like I'd just arrived at her dinner party or something.*

Daphnie (go-along, *Lebanon*): *As we sat waiting to go into the cinema, people came in to drop off presents for her birthday and she seemed completely unfazed by it... She was a master of the space and moved around it very comfortably. She owned it, really, and I felt privileged that she had invited me in.*

Both of these examples are from go-alongs to Clapham Picturehouse, but there was a similar familiarity with the space noted on go-alongs to the Rio.

Ethel (go-along, *The Red Shoes*): *Ethel comes bounding through the door, picks her ticket up at the box office, slips past me and, without looking around, goes straight to the queue for cake, as though her body just knows what to do.*

Rama (go-along, *It's a Wonderful Life*): *She is very smooth, very at home. As we talk she sits with her feet pushing against the end of the balcony. She turns the space into a sitting room.*

Patricia (observation notes after the go-along to *Singing in the Rain*): *There is an almost arrogant ease to the way Patricia behaves at the cinema. She, in part, seems as though she is very relaxed there, and just feels quite comfy. But there's also a more queen-like stature that suggests she owns the place.*

The sense of belonging that I am trying to draw out here was further enhanced by the fact that almost every woman I went to the cinema with had a specific seat that she sat in. At the Rio, where there was only one screen, this was literal:

Lynda: (observation notes after go-along): *On arrival at the cinema I couldn't find her. We were supposed to meet at the box office but I eventually came across her walking down the stairs which she was descending one at a time. She had already dropped her stuff off at the chair, to ensure she got her spot, and came to collect tea and cake for her and a friend who was looking after the seats. She knows the space and event so well I stepped back for a bit and just watch her familiarly glide through these tasks. She's very comfortable in this space. We go upstairs slowly. I am happy she's here and seems happy to see me. We get upstairs and I already know where to go – where I initially found her...We sit down and it feels so contained, close and...cosy.*

And, as discussed, Patricia insists on sitting downstairs:

In amongst all of the care home residents, some quite severely disabled, Patricia sits completely comfortable, unaware of the kerfuffle around her to find a seat for someone unable to walk upstairs. This is Patricia's seat, it is where she always sits, and it appears she is not willing to give it up for anyone.

It was less of an issue at Clapham Picturehouse because there tended to be far more seats available but, nevertheless, every woman I went with expressed a preference for a particular seat in which they would sit when it was free.

Joan (go-along, *Four Lions*): 'I always go aisle. Never sit anywhere else. Always around the middle I suppose...not too near the screen, anyway, because my ears are bad.'

Daphnie (go-along, *Lebanon*): *As we sit down in the back row, Daphnie explained that she always sat there so that if anyone tall comes in she can still sit up and see.*

Pam (go-along, *Inception*): 'I can't sit with anyone in front of me but I don't like to be the one in the front so I tend to come late and sort of find the perfect spot. But it *tends* to be about four rows back and somewhere near the centre.'

It is significant that although much has changed in cinema design across the course of participants' lives, the general layout of auditoria has not shifted significantly. They might be various sizes and few now have balconies like that at the Rio, but while dimensions change the ratio of seats to screen remains relatively even. As such, those preferred positions in relation to the screen are habituated, practised across life, and relate to the ability for cinema as generic space to be made familiar place through practice. This could of course be felt on exploring any regularly practised activity – if we were at the theatre, say, or a pub. But just because it might exist elsewhere, that does not mean it is insignificant to understanding the spatialities of cinema as practice. That this familiarity related to a sense of being 'at home' was further emphasised when, like in Srivinas's (2010b) work, many of the women extended their hosting responsibilities to bringing me food to eat during the film.

Lynda made a cake and brought two slices carefully wrapped in clingfilm, accompanied by a carton of soya milk drink. Joyce also brought homemade cake, along with a flask of tea and cups for both of us. Pat and Janice meanwhile brought grapes — Janice with some sliced apple, Pat with dark chocolate. When I asked, all of them said that they would bring a snack along as a matter of course, but that they had packed extra for me. Even when they did not bring their own food in, they were sure to provide for me from their free cake or biscuits courtesy of the cinema. Rama insisted on splitting her cake with me, and Daphnie snuck extra biscuits in to the cinema wrapped in a tissue. Others bought me a cup of tea, despite my protests and continued attempts to do the same for them. My sense that the cinema was being transformed into a semi-domestic space through the consumption and sharing of food was echoed by Janice on our go-along when she argued that the problem of noisy eating stemmed from the fact that ‘cinema has become an extension of people’s living rooms’. On no go-along did I feel as though I had instigated the meeting, it always felt that I was being taken around as a (sometimes unwelcome) guest.

Srivinas (2010b) similarly notes that the sociability found at the cinema in Bangalore translates to the notion of offering hospitality to those you are with. Many women in groups bring food they have prepared at home or bought at a favourite shop in order to share it among their friends or family. This is, she argues, partly about limiting the risk of being in a public space, but it is also about the status in Indian culture of the cinema as a public/private hybrid (2010b: 297). Although on a much smaller scale, the food sharing I encountered — coupled with my own intense familiarity with cinema-going — resulted in a similar transformation of the space. Through their extension of some practices of home, the women had

in many ways made the cinema their own. In doing so, my embodied perception of the space was changed through participants' practice and I felt like a guest in a familiar, but again reconstituted, space.

In the previous chapter, I offered a discussion of cinema-going across the life course, showing that for many women the cinema has been a constant throughout their lived biographies, either as an absent practice (such as when they were raising children), or as a frequent one (almost all other stages). As discussed, this points to a shifting practical logic of cinema-going across the life course. However, the consistency of cinema and its (sensory) spaces as referent also hints at a certain stability and familiarity pre-reflexively at work in this co-constitution. As a constant presence (even through its absence) for many of the participants, cinema-going in later life appears to offer a familiar activity, unhindered by age. This was often reflected in the women's statements about their relationship to the cinema, particularly for those women who had migrated to London. For Lauretta, recently arrived in London to live with her daughter following her husband's death, the cinema offered a familiar world for her to retreat to.

(go-along, before *A Single Man*): In the beginning it was rather difficult because I lived in Princeton and you used a car to get everywhere and of course there were movie theatres all over the place so you had a choice. And I found it difficult but I'm adjusting. I'm really into films, always have been, and my husband was also so I've been doing it for years... One of the things I found really acceptable and I was happy to discover were these two movie theatres, they made me feel a bit more secure.

Joyce, who had moved from New York to Balham nearly 20 years ago, found a similar feeling of comforting familiarity at the cinema:

(interview): I've been here for 21 years and, um, I have been going to the Picturehouse almost since I arrived. Growing up in small town Jersey I went nearly every week – just to escape! – and for my 25 years in New York, I was on the Upper East Side for years and years in the 60s and 70s ... and then I bought a flat down in the [Greenwich] village. All these places ... the cinema has been my lasting companion.

While Laurice and Mavis, both of whom had come to the UK from Jamaica, were pleased to find a familiar spatial experience at the cinema:

Laurice: Yes, it remind us, it remind us of home

Mavis: Same as here, same like this darling!

Laurice: Same thing, same thing, upstairs, downstairs, same thing

Mavis: Same thing, I tell you something a lot of people don't know, some people don't know: all these things we have. All these things we have, just like home. So it's nice.

These quotes, I think, suggest that while the films are not irrelevant, one significant source of pleasure at the cinema for these participants is the sense of familiarity that it once offered in a new country with many unfamiliar hostile spaces and practices. This was not just the case for participants who had arrived to the UK from other countries. It seemed to have a similar significance to others who had moved around throughout their lives, albeit across far smaller distances.

Joan (go-along, before *Four Lions*): 'Well I don't know [why I like coming] really. It's getting harder but I love it. I've been around but I've done it all my life, even during the war, and I'd miss it... You know I've got a problem with tinnitus and yet I still need a deaf aid in, really, but if I put the deaf aid in [it makes the sound too loud]... and you know I've lost central vision in this eye but I never realised. But I still love the smell and the feeling it gives me.'

And for Maria who had unexpectedly emigrated (back) to Italy for nearly two decades, it provided an anchor in a significantly changed and yet once familiar local area:

Maria (interview): 'OK, 20 years ago I had to leave, my mother became ill in Italy, my husband had just died and I'd only just got married 25 years ago. I went, left my work to go and look after her thinking 'oh in a couple of years she'll die and I'll come back'. I was there for 18 years because she didn't die and she didn't get completely better ... so when she died I came back here, that was about 12 years ago, and everything had changed. There were a few things ... it was nice to still have the cinema because I knew it.'

Meanwhile, the cinemas long gone continued to dominate the remembered landscape of home for those who never left the area they had grown up in:

Lynda (go-along): So that's why I stopped using all the local cinemas. Cos they shut all the local cinemas and turned them into... two of them were snooker Halls, one at Dalston into a snooker hall. And Kings Gym. One became a housing block, one was for retired people. Then the Savoy became a snooker Hall. Stamford Hill, one became. One is still there. The Regent is now Somerfield, the ABC is here Nettos is at Stamford Hill, was a

Sainsbury's at some point. The Ambassador became a mosque... They tended to disappear one after the other. It sort of cascaded along.

Daphnie (interview): I was, as I say, I was three years old when I saw my first film. Now that is down what is now Sainsbury's convenience store... Well, when I first started going of course there was the Pavilion and... And there was the Ritzy at Stockwell because I used to go there sometimes after... The other cinema was the, which is now the Inferno, and that was the Majestic and that was opened in 1912. And then it stopped being a cinema, and that was just a little before the Great War. And we think the temperance movement took it over as a billiard hall. There was one down the road, it's a building just near Sainsbury's and that was known as the 'young men's temperance billiard hall'... Well it was different things, but it wasn't a cinema again. The Floods was the only, you know where there's that supermarket? If you stand and you look up you, or if you stand in the middle of the road, there's, you can see they used to have side exits.

This sense of cinema as familiar and homely – a constant through life – might appear to sit in direct contradiction to my discussion of fluidity and mobility in the previous section and the significance of cinema as a *public* practice. Instead, I believe that by understanding cinema as a mobile home, we can point to a series of dialectics that are fundamental to understanding cinema as practice. Rather than either/or, cinema-going sits at the intersecting point between mobility and stability, fixity and fluidity, material and imaginative. It offers both 'here' and 'there'. Importantly, it is not one or the other but always inescapably both. When we watch a film in the cinema, we are both 'here' and 'there', still and moving, 'at home' and in public, inside and outside, free and limited, safe and threatened. Many of these

tensions have been explored by geographies of home, further suggesting a correspondence between the two sites (Brickell, 2012; Blunt and Dowling, 2006; Schröder, 2006).

It seems to me that for the women I attended matinees with, it is the status of cinema as hybrid space in which the sense of belonging – of being ‘at home’ – is mixed with the public, that is vitally important to cinema as practice. As Bruno points out, the journeys taken at the cinema thus become a ‘dwelling-voyage’ (2002: 103). I would like to suggest that the quotes and observations above imply two practical functions of the dwelling-voyage offered by the cinema that seem significant for cinema-going in later life (Bruno, 2002). First that in this familiar space the women could maintain a public practice with limited risk, as the site threatens little physical danger and offers a ‘safe’ place in which to maintain public identities, albeit on changed terms. Second (and as explored in Chapter Five) that in doing so, while going to the cinema means engaging with representations that contribute negatively to that public identity, the act of being there, watching such representations in some ways mitigates their effect – by virtue of being there, you enact a mode of generation distinct from that either absenced or denigrated, you become one of the ‘ageing well’.

One of the contradictions highlighted by geographies of home is that it is a space of both fear and safety, of control and freedom. We idealise the home as a space of personal freedom, the site of – and haven for – the individual. Returning to the quotes from Joyce, Laretta and Laurice and Mavis above, we can see that the cinema for these women conjures up similar associations. Once in the space, the sensations are familiar, well known even, and a changing body understands the material layout to such a degree that as described earlier, it can adapt it in much

the same way as older people do their home – by developing habitual pathways and positions that constitute a welcoming, comfortable space (Hugman, 1999). This spatial security, along with the mobility described above, contributes to the logic of practice and helps to – pre-reflexively – maintain cinema-going as a pleasurable, worthwhile activity. Part of this is the provision of a familiar space in which to negotiate changing identities – both of which are formed relationally in the moment of practice (Boyle, 2010; Puwar, 2007; Stewart, 2003). This chimes with Bruno's analysis of cinema as providing early female spectators with a route into public space from where they journeyed through film, simultaneously contributing to the change in their status and enabling them to explore the new public role in relative safety (2002: 82).

While I am keen to explore cinema as a mobile home throughout life it is important to emphasise, as argued in Chapter Five, that its status as not-quite-domestic is significant for cinema-going in later life. It has been suggested that, as our bodies age, home becomes an increasingly limiting and somewhat threatening place as it begins to represent the extent of our spatial world (Milligan, 2000; Moss, 1997). Laws (1996, 1995) has shown that ageing must be understood as spatial practice. Her work indicates the ways in which associations of older bodies with particular types of space is marginalising and exclusionary, generating a sense of appropriate and inappropriate features of the landscape of ageing. Here, then, while cultural geographers have shown the screen to be ageist (cf. Robinson et al, 2007; Bildtgård, 2000; Markson and Taylor, 2000), the women are creating new spatial associations and (re)forging a (positive) public identity through practice. Drawing on Laws (1995), McHugh (2000) shows that place-based images of ageing are part of the construction of ageism in society. Maintaining cinema-going

as a spatial practice, then, constitutes an important shift in places of ageing in line with the mode of generation so that they include *public* spaces. It is able to do so, in part, because the familiar structures of material space meet changing bodies to produce an embodied perception of space that provides a sense of being ‘at home’ in public.

In arguing for an understanding of cinema as mobile home, I am clearly not suggesting an idealised notion of domestic space. Those elements that have been idealised are indeed an important part of the logic of cinema-going, just as they are part of the logic for aspiring to have a home. The cinema home, however, much like the domestic one, is a site of conflict and contradiction. And it is one that is practised – and therefore constituted – differently by differently embodied individuals.

4. Conclusion: the mutually constitutive relations between cinema’s bodies, spaces and films.

This chapter took as its starting point the question ‘how are the spaces of cinema constituted?’ While this implies the theme under discussion is space, the ensuing analysis shows that it is inseparable from body and film, just as space is fundamental to understanding them. Indeed, one of the key insights into the ways in which the spaces of cinema are constituted came through an engagement with participants’ bodies. Tuning into the disruption of my own taken for granted perception, I was able to consider the ways in which the material spaces of viewing are co-constituted with different bodies through practice.

Interpreting my findings through Bourdieu’s theory as well as geographical gerontology, the geography of architecture and Schatzki’s (2005; 2003) practice-

arrangement meshes, they seemed to extend Bruno's understanding of the architectonics of cinema. While I consider Bruno's (2002) work very productive in interrogating the complex relationship between film and cinema architecture but it could nevertheless be enriched by a consideration of the lived audiences that co-constitute the building she considers so fundamental to shaping spectatorship. As suggested, my research offered an extension to this understanding suggesting as it did that in practice it is a three-way co-constitutive engagement between audience, architecture and film through which film becomes cinema. An assertion that impacts on both how we understand the nature of cinema's spatialities and how representation might be experienced in practice. Here it relies heavily not just on the cinematic habitus described in the previous chapter but also on the co-constitution of practising bodies and the architectonics of cinema.

This of course impacts on the spatialities on the screen, the exploration of which led me to the 'virtual mobility' of film. My data, read through Bruno (2002) and Friedberg (1993), offers an understanding of cinema as mobile practice. However, by engaging discussions of cinematic habitus outlined in the previous chapter and Voss' (2011) concept of film's 'surrogate body' I understand the spaces that are constituted by audiences as enacted through the remembering body — one shaped by the lived past of habitus. In this way it becomes clear that such habitus impact on the journeys available to us, and the spaces constituted at the cinema. Having undertaken research with a lived audience I would argue that the film only provides half of the journey undertaken at the cinema, it relies on our cinematic habitus for the rest.

This journey to elsewhere, however, was not the only space being constituted at the cinema. Across the course of go-alongs, I was struck by what seemed to be an

extension of the domestic sphere into the cinema site, and was keen to explore how this dialectic of home and away might contribute to the practical logic of cinema. In this context, going to the cinema is a way of maintaining another spatiality and regaining an (imagined) mobility through a familiar practice. While the screen may be 'ageist', it does not directly marginalise the living audience. Instead, by understanding cinema as practice, and considering all of the elements at play, we can see that it simultaneously offers the opportunity to not see yourself in the negative portrayal and, by virtue of being film's surrogate body, insert yourself into the ageist screen by which you are absenced. This doesn't just have a symbolic effect. Instead, there appears to be a second insertion – of older people into mainstream society through the maintenance of everyday public practice.

Having outlined all of these interpretations from my data analysis, in the next and final chapter I revisit my research questions and attempt to draw some tentative conclusions on the key concerns of this thesis.

Chapter Eight. Conclusion: proposing a geography of cinema

This thesis began with a problem. Why, when the representation of ageing in film tends to be understood in academic literature as negative, do the over-45s represent the fastest growing cinema audience in the UK? My project has been an attempt to explore this apparent paradox through a social-practice framework. The discussion has been broad and far ranging, taking in work from geography, gerontology and film studies – all engaged through Bourdieu’s theory of practice and my own empirical work. Approaching cinema in this way raised three elements that I found fundamental to understanding the practice: the lived body of the audience, the films being watched and the material spaces of cinema. Drawn to these elements by my theoretical framework, the arguments outlined in Chapter Two and the questions they prompted me to ask, my empirical work suggested the need to bring them together in order to offer a lived understanding of cinema. It is this I have tried to generate a sense of in the preceding chapters. In doing so, my hope is that a new understanding of the term ‘cinema’ has been carved out – one that *combines* existing meanings connoting film(s) *or* a place of viewing, and that has embodied practice at its heart.

The workings of film as a representational medium continue to dominate academic work exploring cinema. While investigations of moving image’s unique form of spatio-temporal communication are also produced, analyses of individual films, genres, or the output of a particular director or country, remain most common (cf. Harper and Rayner, 2010; Aitken and Dixon, 2006; Cresswell and Dixon, 2002; Stam and Miller, 2000). Analyses of films take a variety of forms and engage a myriad of theoretical frameworks but, as the cultural gerontology arguments outlined in Chapter Two suggest, such studies generally consider the film in

isolation, with understandings of any (imagined) spectator drawn from the film text, and very little consideration of the significance of viewing context to such representations. This is an approach implicitly questioned by the 'quiet revolution' I outlined at the beginning of this thesis. The influx of older audiences to the cinema, despite representations that ostensibly marginalise them, suggests there is more to cinema than film.

Studies of 'cinema', though, remain rare by comparison, with the most considered examples often concerned by iconic historical periods of exhibition (Allen, 2011; Puwar, 2007; Maltby, 2003; Hansen, 1991). There are some exceptions but most of these studies offer conclusions without considering the relationship of exhibition practices to the film on the screen (Boyle, 2010; Srivinas, 2010; Stewart, 2003; Bruno, 2002). Similarly, both here and in work on film audiences, the role of the sensing body in such audiencing is rarely considered, despite it being shown elsewhere to be significant to spectatorship (Voss, 2011; Sobchack, 2004, 2000; Bruno, 2002, 1993; Marks, 2002, 2000).

My methodology led me to studying cinema at the cinema, a surprisingly uncommon approach. Doing so suggested the inseparability of the three elements outlined above (and many others) in practice. For example, exploring representation and its effects by repeatedly watching and deconstructing a film offers a productive analysis of the politics of representation, but findings always emerge from a perspective that does not tell us about the workings of such politics in practice. Looking at the same film *at the cinema* draws out the significance of other elements to the film constituted. The significance of the communal space of viewing is brought into focus as it frames the bodies of the audience and the film

text in particular ways that impact upon the meaning made in the moment — just as both the film on the screen and the audience constitute the nature of the space.

While all of the literatures referenced throughout this thesis offer vital contributions, my hope is that — partly through the different knowledges my methodology encourages — this thesis provides a persuasive argument for more closely integrating their insights towards an understanding of cinema that acknowledges it as made in the moment of practice through a co-constitutive interaction between the material spaces of viewing, the film on screen and the embodied audiences. In this final chapter, then, I want to return to the research questions with which this thesis is concerned, to explore how my understanding of cinema was arrived at and to pull out the theoretical and practical contributions it offers to existing work. Although in this study I have engaged and emphasised the older female body to generate my understanding, I aim here draw out those elements of my work that are appropriate to studies of cinema more widely.

8.1. How is film representation experienced in practice?

Despite arguments that film is a simulacral rather than representational medium, representation remains a core focus of much work on film (Clarke, 2010; Doel, 2008). A good example of such an approach is the literature outlined in Chapter Two from cultural gerontology, analysing film representations of ageing. The discussion showed that this work claims such representations (or lack of them) serve to perpetuate negative stereotypes of later life and constitute old age as a fixed and universally experienced stage in the life course (Robinson et al, 2007; Bildtgård, 2000; Markson and Taylor, 2000). The role of film representations in the cultural construction of old age is drawn out, with ageing bodies understood as

receptors of (negative) meaning, generated in part through films. These analyses offer powerful evidence of the construction of ageism in contemporary society, an ageism that is acknowledged by academia and my participants alike (Calasanti, 2007; Bytheway, 2000).

In our conversation after watching *The Secrets in Their Eyes*, for example, Pam expressed her experiences of growing older in a way that resonates with many of the arguments in gerontology exploring representations of later life:

‘[W]hen you get to a certain age, especially if you’re female, there’s an invisibility about it and it’s so true, people will literally bump into you. Not unkindly but they don’t notice you, they think you’re less than others. I mean it, ageing, knocks one’s self confidence so it’s more exaggerated but on the whole it’s definitely there.’

Pam, though, was a committed attendee of the Clapham Picturehouse and, like all participants, certainly did not regard the film on the screen as contributing to her sense of marginalisation. This, of course, does not mean that the academic analyses are wrong, but it does suggest that film representations are not experienced in practice in the same way that they are understood by gerontology, for example.

Literature on embodied spectatorship, drawn on throughout this thesis, has shown that once the sensing viewing body is incorporated into understandings, seeing representation as stable and fixed becomes challenged (Voss, 2011; Sobchack, 2004, 2000, 1992; Marks, 2002, 2000). In different ways, Voss (2011), Sobchack (2000) and Marks (2000) all emphasise the contribution our sensual bodies make to the film enacted in the moment of viewing. Ideas of representation become

insufficient to understanding film, as meaning is seen as a collaboration between body and screen in the moment of viewing, rather than a one-way projection. The significance of the sensing body to our experience of representation in practice was certainly drawn out in my research. For example, as described in Chapters Six and Seven, my understandings of the scenes of cooking in *Julie and Julia* or al fresco dining in *I Am Love* cannot be separated from the particular sensations they evoked. But what became clear in my own empirical work was something I missed when reading this literature first time round – the significance of *temporality* that a concern with the body brings into focus.

All of the work on embodied spectatorship is concerned by the *in the moment* collaboration between body and film to produce embodied meanings. I certainly found such a temporality significant to cinema, but my empirical work suggested that this instantaneous enactment of meaning was not ahistorical. Memory also became fundamental to my understanding. There is, as outlined in Chapter Six, a developing interest in cinema memory, triggered in the main by Annette Kuhn's (2002) detailed oral history of British cinema-going in the 'golden age' and including Puwar's (2007) study of cinema-going among the Asian population of 1970s Coventry. Such work brings out the social and spatial elements of cinema often left unexplored, and during go-alongs I found many of the memories offered by participants to be resonant of this work. But because my methodology led me to going to the cinema *with* participants, it was here that many such memories were shared. As such I was able to develop existing work by exploring the function of cinema memories *in the present*, as we watch films.

Jones (2001) had previously shown that exploring cinema memory in the moment of viewing has profound effects for our understanding. But her engagement is

limited to the memories evoked on repeat viewings of films that we had been to see on their first release. My research suggested the importance of memory to film viewing in the present had a wider significance and it became fundamental to my understanding of representation in practice. Further, understood through Bourdieu (1977,1990a) memory is a state of the body — it is a form of embodied knowledge that has been inculcated across life and incorporated into our habitus, affecting our practice in the present. As such, it links to theories of embodied spectatorship and similarly offers a sense of the instability of representation in practice. As Chapter Six has outlined more fully, at the cinema I found this embodied knowledge to run along three inseparable but nevertheless distinct lines: films previously seen, cinema-going across the life course and wider biographies.

For all participants, cinema had been an important practice since childhood. Its role in their everyday life varied across that time, but it nevertheless remained important and these past practices seemed significant to cinema in the present. Across all the go-alongs undertaken for this study, there was a consistency in our post-film conversations: they almost always brought us back to other films seen. Sometimes, these were clear memories and references but more often, and more significantly, they were fragments of ‘nearly there’ memories (see also Burgin, 2004). These fragments, I suggest, were insights into those film memories evoked in the moment of viewing not just cognitively but through the body. My argument is that embodied rememberings of films seen and the associated cinema-going practices impact on sensations of viewing in the present and, therefore, the experience of representation in practice. Importantly, though, these memories do not exist in isolation and I found that wider embodied biographies were fundamental to — indeed inseparable from — the embodied perception of film

representation. Taken together, I argue that affective responses to film content are inculcated across life, producing a form of cinematic habitus.

My use of the term habitus is significant here, as thinking memory and embodiment through Bourdieu (1977,1990a) enables me to reinforce arguments made by Sobchack (2000), Voss (2011) and Marks (2000) through a different theoretical prism. It also offers a contribution to this literature as it provides a more developed incorporation of social difference to the sensing body. Through Bourdieu (1977,1990a), the associations of memory with subjective knowledge are challenged. Indeed, the cinematic habitus that I suggest is fundamental to film speaks of our position in social space: the films seen, the cinema-going practices and the wider biographies from which it is shaped are all engaged within limiting structures that co-constitute the inculcated *sense* of appropriate (cinema-going and film viewing) practice in the present. Our social position, then, is incorporated into the body through dispositions that become key to how we make *sense* of film, and indeed to what film we watch. What appears to be a natural response to a film text is the product of history, of the cinematic habitus. To put it another way, our habitus co-constitutes the particular, social, 'surrogate body' offered to film and it is this positioned body that 'oscillates' between the 'real' and the 'as if real', through which it becomes cinema (Voss, 2011; Sobchack, 2000).

Such difference is not ignored by Voss (2011) in her understanding of the surrogate body, and the idea of cinematic habitus that arose as significant to my understanding is not so far away from the 'projective additions' she suggests we provide to a film's narrative in the moment of viewing. As outlined in Chapter Two, one such addition that chimes particularly with my findings is the 'disposition to endow film characters with one's own biographical experiences and memories'

(2011: 192). But where I build on this is to suggest that such biographies and memories *pre-reflexively* co-constitute the film in practice, far beyond just the fleshing out of characters. Such arguments resonate with Marks' (2000) 'cultural sensoria'. Suggesting that sense organs are the 'site where culture crosses the body', Marks (2000: 199) engages this concept to explore the ways in which filmmakers manipulate sensorial memories to move beyond the limits of representation and draw out narratives of exile and migration without relying on referential images. As I have argued throughout this thesis, my hope is that I have broadened the use of such productive thinking to develop the concept of cinematic habitus, extending the importance of the sensorial memories it implies to understandings of all films; of all representation in practice.

This understanding builds on Srivinas's (2002, 1998) concept of 'participatory viewing', in which audiences at cinemas in Bangalore are understood as producers rather than consumers of meaning, using their biographies and repetitive viewing to (loudly) disrupt film narratives at the cinema. As I hope to have shown here, this process – of audience members being part of meaning production – does not require explicitly disruptive behaviour such as that described by Srivinas. Instead, it can be an embodied and pre-reflexive disruption that nevertheless results in the meaning made through cinema. Further, rather than disrupting our ability to take the film in, such embodied memories are in fact vital to us doing so. Rather than film offering distraction from the 'real' world, I argue that distraction – in the form of cinematic habitus – offers 'real' to the film world.

Sensing bodies, then, do indeed collaborate with the film to make their own meaning, but only within the limiting structures that have co-constituted their habitus (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990a). In suggesting an understanding of film viewing

that emphasises the pre-reflexive, bodily, fluid process, I do not wish to lose sight of the significance of the politics of representation. Rather, my methodology led me to understand this as a lived politics that is not so easily reduced to those issues reified by conventional film analyses. Key to this is that we do not engage practice as pre-determined, fixed entities, but nor do we engage as a blank canvas onto which meaning is written. Instead, meaning is co-constituted as film and body are positioned in the moment of viewing, influenced by each entity's limiting structures but nevertheless enacted in the present, in practice. I use the term *co-constitutes* because, just as the film representation is not pre-determined, neither is our position in social space fixed. It is instead contextual and stabilised in the moment of practice in relation to the (in this case) film-field.

In sum, by recognising the practical temporalities of film representation we can begin to see that, while meaning is made in the moment, it is not ahistorical. Instead, it is made in practical time, a time that is both instantaneous and speaks to the past, influencing our sense of the future. Although it might seem spontaneous, our responses to films (the films we co-constitute) are necessarily made from a particular – if contextual – position in social space. But if cinema as practice is temporal and embodied, so too is it spatial. And, over the course of my research the spaces of cinema – those on and off the screen – proved fundamental to my understanding of film representation in practice. To fully explore this question, then, it is important to move on to another: how are the spaces of cinema constituted?

8.2. How are the spaces of cinema constituted?

There are two key spaces of cinema considered in existing literature: those on and those off the screen. As Chapter Two explained, the majority of studies concerned with spaces of viewing tend to be historical in nature (Maltby et al, 2011; Gomery, 1992; Hansen, 1991). The 'new cinema history' proposed by Maltby et al (2011), for example, explores the diverse socio-spatialities of film exhibition and the historical geographies of spaces of viewing. Such work challenges understandings of film history that assume a universal mode of exhibition, highlighting spatial differentiation and emphasising the distinction between rural and urban areas.

Here the buildings in which we watch are recognised as significant to understanding cinema. Far more common in geography, however, is an interest in the spatialities on the screen. As Chapter Two outlined, the geography of film powerfully engages the discipline's understanding of landscape, spatialities, mobilities, scales and networks to offer spatialised analyses of films (Aitken and Dixon, 2006). This has resulted in wide-ranging work but perhaps the most enduring approach is exploring films as a form of social cartography – a map of society's fears, hopes, desires and anxieties that show the ways in which such 'social and cultural meanings are intertwined with space, place, scale and narrative' (Lukinbeal, 2004: 248).

One of the most enduring engagements between geography and film studies is in literature exploring the relationship between urban (post)modernity and film (Hallam, 2010; Roberts, 2010; Webber and Wilson, 2008; Brundson, 2007; Dimendberg, 2005; Neumann, 2001; Ford, 1994; Natter, 1994). Like the early studies of film from Kracauer (1987/1926) and Benjamin (1969/1936), much of this work emphasises the correlation between the sensorial responses encouraged by

the (new) medium and the changing spatial and perceptual landscape of urban modernity, generated in part by the decentring of space-time caused by new technologies of travel such as the railway (Clarke and Doel, 2005: 45). Giuliana Bruno (2002) and Anne Friedberg (1993) take this furthest, arguing that such a history provided film with an inherent mobility. To Bruno, 'a spectator is not a static contemplator – she is a physical entity, a moving spectator, a body making journeys through space' (Bruno, 2002: 56). The spectator becomes a *voyageuse*, moving through film as the film moves through her.

The significance of the spatialities on screen was drawn out in my research too. During our trips to the cinema, the films that participants and I watched seemed to generate a second shared journey: by watching the films together we were going *elsewhere*. This elsewhere could be literal and relate to material places depicted on the screen, but more often it seemed to be a journey to the film's sensorial world, to a co-constituted sensory space. While my sense of this journey could, of course, have been a result of engagement with the literature, particularly Bruno's work (2002), it did also seem to be shared by participants. Think, for example, of Rama's comment after we watched *It's a Wonderful Life* that: 'We went to the olden days, isn't it? We went on a trip back in time!' It was also continually emphasised for me by the bodily responses I recorded, as the film drew to a close and the movements (albeit often quite subtle changes in comportment) of both me and participants, which seemed to suggest we were 'waking up'. This movement provided a sense of return, in this case to the material and symbolic space of the cinema building.

Where I hope my research can contribute to work on the spatialities of film is in offering an analysis of the ways in which such spatio-temporality appeared to play

out in practice among audience members at the cinema. Building on my arguments in the previous section, I found that a film's spatiality and corresponding mobility is co-constituted by our cinematic habitus. Read alongside Voss's notion of the 'surrogate body' (2011), my examples suggest that when we travel at the cinema our destinations are not pre-determined by what is depicted in a film. Instead the spaces of cinema are co-constituted by the sensorial memories of our cinematic habitus. When we watch a film we may see many spaces constructed and places depicted, but the journey to elsewhere relies on affective resonance through a collision between the film and body in which they co-constitute one of the spaces of cinema. As such, and as I suggested in Chapter Seven, the film only provides some of the itinerary in our filmic journey. Our (cinematic) habitus provides the rest (Voss, 2011: 143).

While Bruno (2002) puts most of her energy into arguing powerfully for the acknowledgement of film as an architectural medium, she also insists that the venue of viewing impacts upon this spatiality. As she suggests: '[w]e can be utterly different spectators when we watch the same film in different places, for different models of cinema are figured in the architecture of the theatre itself' (2002: 45). To Bruno (2002), then, the architecture of the cinema building is fundamental to shaping the *voyageuse* that sits before a film ready to take it in. She is guided by the built structure into becoming a particular kind of spectator and engage practices of viewing specific to the regime of seeing suggested by this built form. To Bruno (2002), films become cinema through architecture. Watching films with participants at the cinema I too found that the space of viewing was significant to shaping the film co-constituted by the audience. However, and fundamental to the understanding of cinema I would like to put forward in this conclusion, the

architecture of the cinema was far more fluid in practice than implied by Bruno's (2002) analysis.

Adopting the go-along meant I could explore the lived constitution of such spaces, and in this way the determining authority of the architect implied in Bruno's (2002) analysis is challenged. In her study of black audiences of early cinema in Chicago, Stewart (2003) had already shown that the spaces of cinema are constituted differently by different audience practices, even those spaces that are in the 'same' built form. In her study, this was evident in the difference between theatres on the 'black belt', which attracted all black audiences, and those downtown where black and white audiences would attend. Although I undertook my research in a very different context, I too found the material space of the cinema was shaped in the moment of practice. As Chapter Seven details, across the course of go-alongs, I was struck by the different spaces constituted by participants' embodied practice as compared to those constituted through my own. In observing our movements through the cinema building, I repeatedly found a familiar space shift before my eyes as chair backs were turned into handrails, stairs became barriers and walls resting stops.

Where I hope to contribute to the work of Bruno (2002) and Stewart (2003) is by drawing this spatial contingency out and relating it to the bodies comprising the audience. Undertaking research in a contemporary context enabled me to be at the cinema and generate in situ observations *from the body*. By tuning into my own bodily co-constitution of the space and its disruption through participants' own practice, I was able to recognise the difference between the spaces constituted by each of us as we moved around. This suggests, in line with arguments made in the geography of architecture (Jacobs and Merrimen, 2011; Lees, 2001) and

Schatzki's (2005) concept of practice-arrangement meshes, that the spaces of buildings do not pre-exist our embodied engagement with them. Instead they are co-constituted with the body in the moment through practice. Importantly, it enabled me to see that even able bodies are positioned in relation to built forms and co-constitute buildings in naturalised ways appropriate to inculcated embodied perception, to habitus (Saville, 2008).

One of the key ways in which participants appeared to constitute the material space of the cinema differently to me was in generating a sense of home, and I began to understand going to the cinema for participants as a way of maintaining a public spatiality and regaining an (imagined) mobility in a familiar space while still being part of society. In maintaining such spatialities the cinema became an important site of identity (re)negotiation in a period of change, much like for the mothers in Boyle's (2010, 2009) study of Watch With Baby screenings. By suggesting that we understand cinema as both mobile home and virtual journey, I argue that we can more readily recognise the dialectics that are fundamental to it. Rather than either/or, cinema sits at the intersecting point between mobility and stability, fixity and fluidity, 'home' and 'away', private and public. It is never one or the other but always inescapably both.

It is precisely this status of cinema as a hybrid space – in which the sense of belonging, of being 'at home', is mixed with the public and with going *elsewhere* – that seemed important to understanding the ways in which the spaces of cinema were constituted by the women I attended matinees with. Here a new space of ageing was being co-constituted in the public space of the cinema. As Laws (1996) shows, spaces of ageing co-constitute social understandings of later life. Here I would like to suggest that the cinema space forms – for some – an

important part of generating a spatial identity for the Third Age. In this context, while the screen may be 'ageist', it does not directly marginalise the living audience. Instead by being there, and therefore pre-reflexively asserting membership of the 'active ageing', going to the cinema offers the opportunity to Other any negative portrayal on the screen and, by virtue of being film's 'surrogate body', insert themselves where there is absence (Voss, 2011). This is coupled with a second insertion – of older people into mainstream society through the maintenance of everyday public practice, and the co-constitution of an alternative space of ageing.

But while I would like to emphasise this fluidity of cinema's material and symbolic spaces, it is important to stress that while participants and I were able to constitute the building to a certain extent, this was not without the architecture, in turn, constituting us through its 'implicit pedagogy' (Bourdieu, 1977: 90). In this context, once again, the *co-* in my use of the term *co-constitution* must be emphasised: the practising body is shaped by the material space just as the practising body shapes it. This is significant because, in this shaping, the space of viewing impacts upon the film made in the moment so that each space of cinema is integrated with the other through the body. This work of co-constitution, then, suggests that modes of spectatorship 'housed' by cinema architecture do not pre-exist the living audience. Instead, it is possible to extend Bruno's (2002) argument to suggest that the film becomes cinema through the co-constituted (differentiated) viewing body and exhibition site – the body is a mediating force between screen and architecture. It is the interaction between audience, architecture and film – rather than that between the screen and the walls – that film becomes cinema.

My exploration of this question, then, drew out both material and symbolic spaces of cinema. It suggests that both spaces of cinema are spaces of identity formation, and that they are inseparable from the viewing body. But the spaces of cinema are multiple and they are constituted by differentiated practising bodies, just as those bodies are constituted by it. As this section has begun to suggest, the ways in which the spaces of cinema are constituted is tied to how we practice cinema. As such, in order to continue this discussion it is important to move on to discuss how differentiated bodies might practice cinema differently. I have, of course, already started this exploration with regard to film and space but the following section explores an emergent difference I found constituted through cinema as practice.

8.3 How might differentiated bodies practice cinema-going differently?

In the discussions above, a sense of embodied social difference has already emerged as key to my understanding of cinema. But while my argument for a cinematic habitus helps to suggest the ways in which differentiated bodies and film might be understood to be mutually constitutive, this question – and the above discussion about cinema's spaces – also points to another finding: my argument that a distinct mode of generation was being enacted in the shared space of the cinema. Throughout this thesis I have drawn on work from film and cinema history that explores the public dimension of exhibition, and the audiences it implies (Allen, 2007; Puwar, 2007; Jancovich et al., 2003; Stewart, 2003; Bruno, 1993; Gomery, 1992; Hansen, 1991), as well as the small amount of work produced in a contemporary context exploring cinemas and their audiences (Boyle, 2010, 2009; Srivinas, 2010a, 2010b, 2002, 1998; Hubbard, 2003a, 2003b, 2002). I have shown that this diverse body of work highlights the nature of cinema as a public practice, and that much of it concludes that particular identities are forged and asserted in

the collective space of cinema. Most of these studies, however, suggest that the formation of such identity is unique to the particular culture or audience under study.

Stewart (2003), for example, explores the significance of cinema-going for newly arrived black migrants from the segregated south to the integrated north of Chicago in the 1910s. In doing so, she powerfully argues that the cinema became an important venue in which an audience that had long been denied one could form and (re)negotiate a public identity for an audience that had long been denied one. In a contemporary context, as I began to discuss above, Boyle (2010, 2009) argues that attendees of 'watch with baby' screenings engage the cinema as a way to (re)constitute identities in light of their (new) roles as parents. Fundamental to this is the shared space of the cinema, considered by her participants to be a safe place in which to learn these new roles without fear of moral judgement. In her work on cinema-going in Bangalore, Srivinas (2010a, 2010b, 2002, 1998) argues that the sociability she found so vital to the practice, and the multiple identities being asserted in the stratified space of the cinema, are unique to India. Puwar (2007) meanwhile, in her study of cinemas owned and attended by the Indian diaspora in 1970s Coventry, argues that a shared identity was being constituted and maintained not just by being at the cinema, but also because of the films watched. Not only does Puwar (2007) see this as unique to the community under discussion (and it no doubt was), in her case Puwar (2007) considers this sociability is a lost element of cinema, now that its 'golden age' has ended.

Having found a similar phenomenon across go-alongs, I would argue that while the identity might be specific to the audience and events under study, the forging of a

(fleeting) collective identity in the shared space of the cinema is not. Instead, it is a fundamental part of all cinema as practice, albeit often in less perceptible ways than my example and those above. Further, my research strongly suggests that such identity formation does not happen in ways that can be mapped and predicted. We cannot say that because someone is middle class, for example, they will practise the cinema in particular ways. Instead, multiple dimensions of habitus – class, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, generational (to name but a few) – exist, and will be drawn out in different configurations depending on the cinema field. Indeed, across my work I was struck by this affinity between and across audiences not because I had predicted it would exist but because it existed in spite of other, powerful, ‘objective’ markers of difference.

As outlined in Chapter Five, in going to the cinema with participants I was able not just to explore their practice but also more readily interrogate my own, and I was frequently struck throughout my research by a *sense* of discomfort that appeared to stem from a subtle discordance between our dispositions, between habitus. It is this that my discussion of the spaces of cinema above begins to suggest and it links to a broader sense of embodied difference felt throughout fieldwork. During data analysis I realised that this boiled down to an almost determined neatness. This neatness generated an embodied affinity across a diverse group, an embodiment in relation to which my own comportment felt distinctly inelegant and clumsy. Examining this through Puwar’s (2001) understanding of the ‘somatic norm’ and Bourdieu’s modes of generation, I found that this ‘discordance’ spoke of different generations, of differently practised femininities. I suggested a shared mode of generation being enacted in the moment of cinema, one that I was not and could not be part of. My sense of this embodied affinity across participants

was emphasised as we watched films together. I began to witness what seemed to be a shared affective dimension of cinematic habitus that - when analysed with participants' stated preferences for particular kinds of film content - I understood to relate to a *sense* inculcated across life of appropriate or inappropriate images. Here, it generated a sort of pre-reflexive solidarity because the subtle bodily responses I witnessed amounted to an embodied assertion of taste – a taste that stemmed from a shared cinematic history. It was this, I felt, that was being drawn out in the space of the cinema.

In this way, by studying cinema at the cinema, I was able to challenge my ideas about social difference and witness the multi-dimensional habitus at play in practice, as particular elements seemed to be pre-reflexively asserted, while others – certainly important elsewhere – were attenuated (Nayak, 2011; Blakemore and Boneham, 1994). But the practical enactment of a mode of generation is not just about developing a sense of shared identity in the moment of practice. It is also an assertion of difference, in this case to *previous* modes of generation. Here, I think, the audience was practically negating the Fourth Age. Fundamental to this is the maintenance of a public identity in later life, and the constitution of a new *public* space of ageing. Importantly, however, this is not a conscious rejection. Instead, in the final analysis, what I am discussing is not resistance to ageing but maintenance of habitus, a habitus that significantly differs from the previous generational cohort.

Importantly the shared identity being pre-reflexively asserted through the body is not about a permanent, pre-determined, shared social label, it is instead that in this context certain shared elements of multi-dimensional habitus are drawn out. This builds on Hubbard's (2002) argument that the desirability of particular

cinemas is based on the 'riskless risk' of being with people from the same social group. It does so by suggesting that such sameness and distinction are, in part, constituted in the moment of practice.

But my exploration of this question has significance outside of studies of film and cinema, too. It offers a contribution to fledgling work exploring the relationship between cultural and material ageing – an approach to gerontology developed to bring the lived body back in to a discipline that had become dominated by theories of social and cultural construction (Twigg, 2012, 2004; Phinney and Chelsa, 2003; Harper, 1997). This work argues for recognition of the body not just as a receptor but a *generator* of meaning. Bourdieu's (1977, 1990a) understanding of the habitus provides a way to build on such arguments as it suggests that the body is not just written on to by society but is *shaped* by it, so that the *materiality* of our body is always at once *both* social and personal.

Most significantly, Bourdieu (1977) argues that a shift in the value of capital across age-classes leads to a similarity in generational dispositions that can cut across the usually dividing lines of social class (1977: 78). As such, while the determined neatness I noticed could relate just to clothing, to appearance, what is at stake for me here is an *embodiment* that spoke to a differently practised femininity. It spoke of adherence to a 'somatic norm' (Puwar, 2001) that was (in the case of both me and participants) time stamped. Thus, it offers a way of understanding older bodies as differentiated without having to revert to purely biological explanations based on notions of 'natural' decline. Instead, we can see that symbolic capital of the body reduces in old age not just because the visible signs of biological ageing have negative connotations in a society that valorises youth, but also because our

dispositions speak to earlier times. Our body becomes not just 'old' but 'old-fashioned'.

In sum, different bodies practise cinema-going differently depending on practical logic that speaks to habitus. This habitus, however, is multi-dimensional and the difference implies is fleetingly determined in the moment of practice so that different dimensions are drawn out in particular social fields. As in all previous sections, the findings discussed here cannot be separated from my methodology. Being there, at the cinema, and studying spectatorship in the moment enabled a more fluid and contextual (although enduring) understanding of social difference to come to the fore. Similarly, it was my position at the cinema that enabled me to draw on my own embodied experience and bodily sensations, a positioning which led to many of the findings discussed thus far. I have, then, already begun to suggest the elements of my methodology that I found to be most productive but since it was a key question for this thesis, I end this chapter with a discussion of how we might empirically explore practice.

8.4. How might we explore practice empirically?

As my findings outlined above suggest, by studying cinema at the cinema I was able to generate a lived understanding that challenges and contributes to existing literatures. I developed such a methodology because, as Chapter Four outlines, adopting Bourdieu's theory of practice (1977,1990a) has significant methodological implications. Concerned as he is with pre-reflexive and embodied knowledge, Bourdieu's (1977,1990a) main issue with conventional interviews or observation is that they can encourage the academic tendency of allowing a researcher's own perspective and desire for certainties eclipse the logic of practice

(1990a; 1977). In an interview, for example, he argues that ‘what is essential goes without saying because it comes without saying’ (1977: 18): the inculcated embodied knowledge that guides practice being taken for granted by participants. As such, researchers are left understanding social practice as driven by a series of explicitly stated, objectively engaged, set of rules. Observation, Bourdieu (1990a: 55) suggests, can be more productive but only if engaged reflexively, if the researcher acknowledges their own perceptive filters and recognises the temporality of practical logic thus avoiding presenting practice as a pre-existing ‘fait accompli’. Such reservations about our ability to empirically study practice led me to ask the question above. In an attempt to develop a methodology that addressed some of these issues, I turned to a relatively new formulation of participant observation aimed at combining two methods to undertake interviews in the moment of practice: the go-along.

As I have indicated, by far the two most common methods adopted for studying film and cinema are desk-based film analyses or historical research. While work with film audiences has been growing since Barker and Brooks’ (1998) study of *Judge Dredd*, the majority is undertaken in focus group or interview contexts. Unlike these methods, the go-along requires that you accompany a participant as they carry out the practice of interest — in this case cinema-going (Kusenbach, 2003). I could only find two other contemporary studies that had engaged a form of participant observation at the cinema, and they both suggested that doing so offered powerful insights (Boyle, 2010, 2009; Srivinas, 2010a, 2010b, 2002, 1998). Reading both after having conducted my research I was struck by similarities in our findings despite quite different research contexts and engagements with different theoretical frameworks. Srivinas (2010a, 2010b, 2002, 1998) and Boyle

(2010, 2009), too, emphasise the significance of the embodied audience, raise the fluidity of film meaning in the moment of viewing and highlight the relevance of the public space of the cinema to such a process. I have outlined above some of the ways my project talks to their findings. One of the ways I hope to build on their studies is methodologically — in drawing out and interrogating such an approach and engaging a specific methodological framework to do so.

Chiming with Bourdieu's (1977, 1990a) concerns about social science methodology, literature on the go-along emphasises the method's ability to access pre-reflexive, embodied perception (Moles, 2008; Anderson, 2004; Kusenbach). With embodied knowledge increasingly of interest to researchers attempting to overcome the Cartesian dualism, the go-along is not the only method engaged on these terms. What the go-along offered a study of cinema was not just being there and drawing on my body in observation *or* interviewing and considering the bodily responses. Instead, it offered a way to do both in situ. It enabled me to watch what people do as well as listen to what they say about what they do. In this way, I could explore cinema from the body in the moment but also generate a sense of the wider temporalities of cinema through our conversations.

In combination with informal pre-go-along interviews, it was this that enabled me to generate an understanding of cinematic habitus, and of the embodied affinity that led to my suggestion that a mode of generation is being practically enacted at the matinees. By being there, at the cinema, I was also able to develop an understanding of the space more fluid than that previously proposed in the literature. In sum, it emphasised the interaction between film, body and space in the moment of practice — an interaction fundamental to the understanding of cinema being proposed here. But while I found the go-along key to these findings,

it is important to acknowledge that this was despite the method on paper seeming rather inappropriate for a study of cinema. Indeed, Kusenbach (2003), goes so far as to argue that, 'the unique potential of the go-along method cannot be fully developed when applied to settings in which informants pursue stationary, internal activities' (2003: 477). While there was a fair amount of walking with participants in my study, there was also a substantial period of each go-along spent sat relatively still, as we watched the film together. In this way, my research meant I didn't just engage the go-along to explore cinema, but also engaged cinema to explore the go-along.

As the discussion above suggests, I found a virtual mobility at the cinema that appeared to produce many of the same insights as the traversal of material space encouraged. Such a discovery meant the method inadvertently led me (through Bruno, 2002, and Friedberg, 1993) to think about the virtual journeys taken through film. Conversations following films suggested that these journeys were methodologically generative in a way similar to the actual mobility of our walking through the space. As my discussion of cinematic habitus above suggests, information that had not arisen in interviews – and which I would never have thought to ask about – emerged in post-film conversation. These revelations in part fleetingly exposed the pre-reflexive knowledge of habitus, and it seemed that the spatio-visual cues of the film had brought such information to the fore, in much the same way as the built environment drawn on in 'walking with' (Pink, 2007a; Kusenbach, 2003).

What I would like to argue here, then, is that although we are sitting down when we watch films, we are nevertheless mobile. I argue this on two counts. First that, as Wylie (in Merrimen et al., 2008) notes, there is a mobility to 'our own breathing

bodies shifting about in these seats, our eyes, flicking about this room' (2008: 203). Indeed, as Lorimer points out, 'mobility can be the continual flux of sitting still' (2008: 206). Second, I would like to suggest – as my discussion above and in Chapter Seven argues – that we do not need to be in traversing physical space to go elsewhere. This is relevant to the question above because although the cinema context offers a good opportunity to make this point, it speaks to the relevance of go-alongs to a broad range of practices that might otherwise not be empirically explored in this way. For example, a similar argument could be made about watching sport, attending a concert, listening to the radio, visiting the theatre and so on. Indeed, Bissell (2009) has made a similar point about sleeping train passengers. Having cinema as an example is fortuitous, however, because of the existing work exploring film's virtual mobility (Bruno, 2002; Friedberg, 1993).

In this way, despite this potential problem with the method for a study of cinema, I found that many of the insights promised in the literature rang true in my research context. However, I found that it did so on quite different terms to those suggested. Pink (2008a, 2007a), for example, argues that in walking with participants, her body becomes a tool for empathy, an empathy that stems from shared sensorial experience. My experience of the method was perhaps less smooth. Although thus far unacknowledged in the literature, the nature of the go-along requires that the researcher inserts themselves into the regular practice of another – an insertion that 'invokes the physical awkwardness of the body' (Coffey, 1999: 73). And while initially I found this awkwardness, this disruption, a downside of the method as practised I in fact came to see it as fundamental to the findings of my study. I, too, came to a form of embodied empathy but it was an empathy based on difference in the face of ostensibly shared sensorial experiences.

In walking through the space of the cinema, for example, it was precisely the disruption of my own embodied perception that enabled me to recognise the fluidity of such spaces in practice and their co-constitution with practising bodies. I was able in these moments to perceive the space differently, but this shifted perception stemmed from an acknowledgement of difference that enabled me to overcome the assumption that the spaces I co-constitute are also those that others experience. I think, perhaps, that the key reason for this was because I was studying a practice in which I engage outside of a research context, in cinemas I know. It was in this way that my own pre-reflexive practice and practical logic was challenged because, by doing the cinema differently, the elements outlined above were emphasised. As such, while I would like to suggest that the go-along is a productive method through which we can empirically explore practice, I would like to emphasise that it is most effective when we tune into these differences and engage it to learn not just about participants' practice, but our own.

Adopting such a methodology to explore cinema is surprisingly innovative. And if this thesis makes no other contribution, I hope that it at least helps to broaden the methodological tools engaged to study film and cinema. By being at the cinema the integrated importance of the space of viewing, the bodies of the audience and the film on the screen is more readily recognised. Witnessing the interrelation between them in the moment of practice contributes to understandings of each individually, and emphasises the fleeting co-constitutive nature of their meanings. In engaging all of this throughout this thesis, I hope to not just have spoken about cinema but also to have evoked a sense of being there – an insight possible precisely because of my methodology.

8.5. Proposing a geography of cinema³³

To adopt Bourdieu's (1977) understanding of practice is to inherit a concern for the body and for the spatial, acknowledging that representations are not experienced in universal ways because they play out differently in different habitus. By offering a way of combining the subjective and objective elements of practice, Bourdieu's (1977,1990a) concept of habitus provided a useful basis from which to attempt to develop an understanding of cinema that neither focuses entirely on what is seen or on what is done but instead takes both into consideration. Bourdieu's theory of practice allowed me to read cinema in a particular way that highlighted how our past practice impacts on that in the present in implicit as well as explicit ways. This helped me to make sense of the bodily relationship to the screen and relate it to wider debates about the nature of cinematic space and the meanings of film. Of course, following Bourdieu's framework almost certainly also meant I missed out on other elements of cinema but I would hope in this thesis to have at least begun to encourage recognition that the co-constitution of the viewing body, the film on the screen and the spaces of viewing are fundamental to cinema as practice.

To generate this understanding of cinema, I have attempted to combine lessons from academic literature thinking through the body, film and space. Such engagement has led to a wide-ranging discussion and, while I hope it has generated a provocative exploration that encourages further conversations between disciplinary fields, it also inevitably left out many of their insights. My purpose has not been to present a coherent, total whole of what cinema is. This, of course, is impossible to capture. It has rather been an attempt to approach cinema

³³ Lukinbeal and Zimmerman's (2008) edited collection is entitled *A Geography of Cinema* but the focus remains films.

as social practice to generate insights not yet gained through more conventional avenues which tend to access film and cinema from one or two of the three elements I have tried to capture.

The rare instances that all three have been considered, as in Srivinas' (2010) and Boyle's (2010) work, indicate that the moment film becomes cinema is irreducible to either one. Despite lacking the close attention to each element found in literatures devoted to them, I hope that my work contributes to the project begun by Boyle (2010) and Srivinas (2010) by offering a theoretically engaged exploration of cinema-going as practice in the present. By focussing on the older female body, I hope that this project extends understandings of embodied spectatorship to consider diversity and positioning as vital to the ways in which film becomes cinema through the body. By doing this, the opposition between pleasure and suffering suggested in the opening argument – between negative representations on the screen and the positive implications of cinema-going – becomes a dialectic that resides in the practising body through which film becomes cinema.

I am not the first to suggest such an integrated analysis. While analyses of film texts remains a core part of film studies, many have argued that the significance of film is over-emphasised in our understanding of cinema. For example, in her oral history of British cinema-going in the 1930s and 1940s, Kuhn (2002) found that films rarely featured in her participants' memories. She argues that this insight 'raises significant questions not only for the methodology and concerns of research in cinema history, but also for the broad field of film studies' (2011: 85), exposing as it does a discrepancy between the field's focus on film and the socio-spatial nature of cinema. Confronted by such questions Maltby et al's (2011, 2007)

solution is to suggest the 'new cinema history', a move that encourages 'bottom-up approach [to] lived cinema cultures' (Meers et al., 2010: 272), and an acknowledgment that, 'for most audiences, for most of the history of cinema, their primary relationship with 'the cinema' has not been with individual movies-as-artefacts or as texts, but with the social experience of cinemagoing' (Maltby and Stokes, 2007: 2). In this context, Maltby and Stokes propose a distinction be made between film history 'an aesthetic history of textual relations between individuals or individual objects' and cinema history — 'the social history of a cultural institution' that focuses on 'accounts of how the commercial institution of cinema operated ... and the socio-cultural history of its audiences' (2007: 2).

Apart from the historical focus – and the different understandings that such a focus inevitably produces – this approach to cinema is not dissimilar to that which I am proposing here. One rare example of a contemporary study of cinema on these terms from geography is Hubbard's (2002) study of cinema-going in Leicester, undertaken to explore the coincident rise of the multiplex in out-of-town locations and the revival of cinema-going in Britain. But, while Hubbard's (2002) study powerfully suggests the different insights gained when geography offers a social understanding of cinema, such an approach has remained absent in the discipline since its publication (Aitken and Dixon, 2006). Despite its growing influence in film studies, then, the geography of film remains relatively untouched by an interest in cinema as practice, and resolutely focused on the film text (Dixon et al, 2008). If I can make one recommendation at the end of this thesis, I would like to propose that, alongside the geography of film, we put effort into generating a geography of *cinema*. Unlike Maltby et al's (2011) new cinema history, however, my research suggests that the geography of cinema should emphasise its nature as a spatial,

embodied, social practice. It should incorporate the film on the screen in analyses but recognise that cinema is not defined by this alone. Most importantly, having conducted this study, I would like it to recognise cinema as collaboration between the bodies in the audience, the film on the screen and the spaces of viewing.

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Appendix One: Participants and films

At the request of participants, some names have been changed.

The Rio Cinema

Name	Age	Occupation	Ethnicity	Film watched	Relationship	Children
Rama	62	Council Administrator	Indian Asian	It's a Wonderful Life (Capra, 1946)	Divorced	2
Ethel	81	Catering and then Care Assistant (elderly)	African Caribbean (Dominican)	The Red Shoes (Powell and Pressberger, 1948)	Widowed	3
Edith	85	Housewife and mother	White British	Closing the Ring (Attenborough, 2007)	Widowed	2
Giuseppina	66	Restaurateur	White Italian	An Education (Scherfig, 2009)	Widowed	3
Jane	91	Housekeeper and cook	White British	Nowhere Boy (Taylor-Wood, 2009)	Divorced	2
Janet R	60	Teacher/Pastor's wife	White British	De Lovely (Winkler, 2004)	Married	3
Jean	72	Academic administrator	White British	Good Hair (Stilson, 2009)	Single	none
Joanne	88	Librarian	White British	Nine (Marshall, 2009)	Separated	1
Laurice	84	Care Assistant (hospice)	African Caribbean (Jamaican)	Julie and Julia (Ephron, 2009)	Widowed	4
Lynda	68	Printer and telephone operator	White British	Last Chance Harvey (Hopkins, 2008)	Married	2
Maria	76	Air Stewardess and, for 18 years, a carer for her mother	White Italian	Calamity Jane (Butler, 1953)	Widowed	1
Mavis	77	Care Assistant (elderly)	African Caribbean (Jamaican)	Julie and Julia (Ephron, 2009)	Married	4
Patricia	78	None identified	White Australian	Singing in the Rain (Donan and Kelly, 1952)	Divorced	none
Susan	74	Care assistant	African Caribbean (Jamaican)	Gentlemen Prefer Blonds (Hawks, 1953)	Widowed	8

Clapham Picturehouse

Name	Age	Occupation	Ethnicity	Film watched	Relationship	Children
Ann	77	Surveyor	White British	Seven Samurai (Kurosawa, 1954)	Widowed	None
Barbara	79	Alternative healer	White British	Leaving (Corsini, 2009)	Married	2
Daphnie	85	Senior administrator, SOGAT	White British	Lebanon (Maoz, 2009)	Single	None
Diane	76	Police receptionist/dog breeder	White British	Four Lions (Morris, 2010)	Divorced	2
Dr Anlaw	78	Medical doctor	White British	The Ghost (Polanski, 2010)	Widowed	2
Janet	82	Civil Servant	White British	Letters to Juliet (Winick, 2010)	Widowed	none
Janice	67	Civil servant/amateur dramatist	White British	Gainsbourg (Sfar, 2010)	Widowed	2
Jenny	64	Medical administrator	White British	Sherlock Holmes (Ritchie, 2009)	Partner	None
Joan	88	Women's Airforce and waitress	White British	Four Lions (Morris, 2010)	Widowed	2
Joyce	66	Academic administrator	White American	Up in the Air (Reitman, 2009)	Single	None
Lauretta	86	Production manager, publishing	White Italian American	A Single Man (Ford, 2009)	Widowed	2
Mrs Haider	87	Therapist	White British	Letters to Juliet (Winick, 2010)	Married	1
Norma	79	None identified	White British	Salt (Noyce, 2010)	Divorced	1
Pam	68	Civil servant (Senior Executive)	White British	Inception (Nolan, 2010)	Married	None
Pat	71	Early years education specialist	White British	The Secret in Their Eyes (Campanella, 2009)	Widowed	3
Sheila	73	Teacher, head of English	White British	I am Love (Guadagnino, 2009)	Partner	2
Shelagh	82	None identified	White British	It's Complicated (Meyers, 2009)	Partner	2
Theresa	84	Civil Servant	White British	Alice in Wonderland 3D (Burton, 2009)	Partner	3
Wendy	70	Ad hoc	Burmese/White British	I am Love (Guadagnino, 2009)	Separated	3

Appendix Two: Questions used as a framework for interviews

Below is a list of the questions I went to interviews with in case conversations were not forthcoming. It is perhaps unnecessary to highlight that they in no way represent the entirety of topics discussed and were intended more as triggers where needed than they were to generate a consistency in answers.

1. Please tell me your age, name and where you live
2. Were you employed?
 - If so, how old were you when you retired?
 - How have you found it?
3. Could you talk a little bit about your life?
 - Where you grew up?
 - Who with?
 - Did you go to the cinema a lot?
4. Describe the last time you went to the cinema
5. Tell me about your favourite films
6. Tell me about the Rio/Picturehouse matinees
 - How long have you been attending?
 - Why?
 - Do you attend alone or with others?
7. Do you have a favourite cinema (it can be from any time in your life)?
 - If so, please explain why
8. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me?